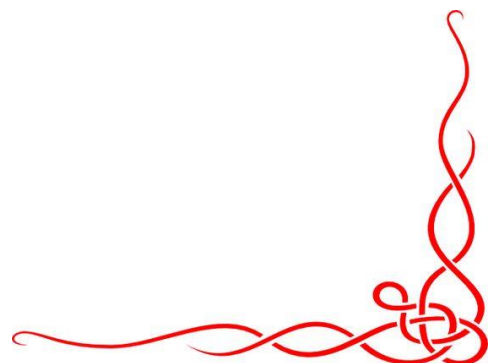


The Isle of Man: all dressed up but nowhere to go.
Can place branding and marketing strategies help
turn around the fortunes of the Isle of Man?

This thesis is submitted in accordance with the requirements of the
University of Chester for the degree of Doctor of Business
Administration by Florida Clements

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Declaration

“The material being presented for examination is my own work and has not been submitted for an award of this or another HEI except in minor particulars which are explicitly noted in the body of the thesis. Where research pertaining to the thesis was undertaken collaboratively, the nature and extent of my individual contribution has been made explicit.”

Part of this thesis has been presented at the 4th Annual Conference of the International Place Branding Association - Volos, Greece, 27-29 November 2019

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The Isle of Man: all dressed up but nowhere to go. Can place branding and marketing strategies help turn around the fortunes of the Isle of Man?

Florida Clements

Abstract

Place branding and marketing has become one of the tools employed in the competition between countries and cities for attracting businesses, investments and a talented workforce. Place branding and its underlying factors, place identity and place image, have been widely researched especially in the last two decades, however it is yet to be agreed upon models and frameworks which can assist practitioners in their day-to-day activity. Through investigating the role of place identity in place branding strategies, this research aims to explore how place branding strategies can help the IoM to enhance its image and attract businesses and a talented workforce. Identification of a place brand model or framework would assist the IoM brand managers in their efforts to show the IoM as an attractive location for businesses and workers.

This research was conducted adopting a social constructionist philosophy and following an interpretivist theoretical perspective. The focus of the research is placed on comparing and contrasting how the Isle of Man is perceived by local and relocated business people with how it is portrayed through the IoM government websites, providing a contrast between place identity and place brand identity. Therefore 15 interviews are analysed using thematic analysis and six IoM government websites are analysed using qualitative content analysis.

From the findings emerged a strong sense of ambiguity when looking at the IoM as a place for business and as a place of residence highlighting the fact that people's perceptions about places are not one dimensional. This finding supports the suggestion that places have multiple identities. Also some of the characteristics of the IoM were aligned with what was presented in the websites, but other characteristics did not, which coincided with dissatisfaction for the respondents. These findings suggest that misalignment of certain place brand attributes with place identity coincides with dissatisfaction, however the source of dissatisfaction is not the misalignment but rather the quality of the attributes not matching the expectations. Classification of the place brand attributes that give rise to dissatisfaction or satisfaction is identified as an important factor in developing the place brand strategies.

The contribution of this research is focused on making a difference to business practices by offering a practical solution; an adaptation of the Two-factor Theory is suggested as a tool that could aid the process of brand attribute classification. The application of the Two-factor Theory could assist the IoM brand managers to monitor and develop the alignment of place identity with place brand identity. Whilst the adaptation of the Two-factor theory has already been confirmed in product branding, further quantitative research could help in establishing its reliability and validity for place branding.

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Dedication:

To my mother and my father, whose love has been
supreme inspiration and beacon of light
throughout my life, and my children, who I hope
to inspire.

1 Chapter 1. Introduction

Perceptions of the Isle of Man held by its residents and by external bodies and particularly by prospective new residents to the Island has and continues to be a key consideration for those charged with marketing the IoM as a destination for both businesses looking to relocate as well as for talented individuals, needed to enable businesses based on the Island to thrive and continue to grow successfully. This study is focused in particular on the business community comprising both established and newly arrived businesses, exploring their perceptions of the IoM and the influences on those perceptions.

This first chapter starts with a background of the study in order to provide context for the issues that are being researched. It continues further by identifying the research gap, the contribution that this research could potentially make in aiding the practitioners in the IoM, and how this contribution is achieved through addressing the aim and objectives set for this research. The outline of the methodology highlights the philosophical underpinning and methods selected in order to address the aim and the objectives of this research. The chapter closes with an outline of the structure of the research, by introducing each individual chapter.

1.1 Background

The IoM is a small self-governing crown dependency, located in the middle of the Irish Sea. Throughout its history, the Island has weathered wars and invasions from Celts and Vikings and has survived through good and bad times (Winterbottom, 2007). From the late 14th century until the 1960s, the IoM was a major holiday destination for British tourists (Canavan, 2015a). However, by the mid-1970s, when holidays to exotic places became affordable for British tourists, tourism in the IoM started declining (Canavan, 2014). McElroy (2000) notes that the economies of small islands due to their size, cannot rely on their exports of produce. They rely mostly on tourism, therefore the change in income or taste of the overseas tourism market can have a major impact on small islands economies, especially when their competitors are bigger countries in terms of geographical size, population and economies (McElroy, 2000). As a result, the IoM government needed to find ways to reduce the reliance on tourism. According to Robinson and McCarroll (1990) since the early 1960's the government of the IoM attempted to stimulate the island's economy by changing taxation policies and offering incentives to investments in manufacturing. Even though this was followed by a series of changes in taxation rate, it was the decline in tourism in the 1970's which prompted the government to take further steps "to stimulate compensatory growth in the financial sector" (Robinson &

McCarroll, 1990, p. 239), by including concessions to the banking industry and abolition of the Usury act. Later on in the 1980's, government strategy focused more toward the banking, financial and professional services, which by 2001 accounted for 48% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), whereas the low value added and declining sectors such as tourism and agriculture were not seen as a priority any more (Ernst & Young, 2012).

In 2011 the VAT agreement between the IoM and the UK government was changed and the IoM government found itself with an income shortfall of about £75m a year (O'Hare, 2011; Treasury IoM Government, 2011). Another concern of the government became the increased proportion of aged population (IoM Government, 2013), followed by an increased cost of Public Sector Pensions (Cabinet Office, 2016). In 2017, the IoM Cabinet Office reported that the IoM had experienced 32 years of continuous economic growth until 2015 (Economic Affairs Cabinet Office, 2017), despite the financial crisis and economic downturns in previous years around the world. However, the IoM did report a negative growth in the financial year 2015/2016, with a decline in GDP by 1.5% (Cabinet Office, 2017).

Faced with myriad financial problems, the government took the decision to become "smaller and smarter" (p. 8) and aim to grow the economy without increasing taxes (IoM Government, 2016). Following this decision, new changes were introduced to the pensions scheme (Cabinet Office, 2016) and a new strategy to drive economic growth and diversify the economy was introduced (Cabinet Office, 2017). The new strategy aims were to attract talented IT experts and businesses to relocate under the slogan "Our island: a special place to live and work" (Isle of Man Government, 2017b).

In addition to the difficulties that the IoM was trying to address, in 2016 an investigation of the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), linked the IoM to the offshore companies that facilitated tax avoidance ("Isle of Man Archives - ICIJ," 2018). The publication of the ICIJ investigation was found to have a negative impact on the IoM image (Garside, 2017; Kelly, n.d.), which could potentially undermine the initiatives to diversify the economy, despite the efforts of the IoM government to cooperate with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and European Union (EU), and comply with their transparency regimes. Ingenhoff, Buhmann, White, Zhang and Kioussis (2018) suggest that the media narratives strongly influence public opinion towards associating companies with countries, and as result transferring their perceptions from one to the other. The transfer of the perceptions for a company to the country is defined as reputation spill-over effect from the company to the country (Ingenhoff et al., 2018) and its impact in the case of the IoM was reflected in the fact that businesses were finding it hard to recruit talented workforce from outside the Island (Hawker, 2017). In addition, the IoM government was facing the same problem in attracting businesses to relocate, despite financial incentives (IoM Government, 2018). Tynwald, the

IoM parliament, approved a £50 million fund to support the start-up companies, but the fund had to close after less than two years, due to very low demand (Department for Enterprise, 2018).

Earlier, in 2006, as a way to try to enhance the IoM image, the IoM government appointed a Steering Committee which engaged Acanchi and HPI consultancies in a branding exercise. The consultancies reported to the IoM government that, based on their survey, people outside the IoM had either a “limited and uninspiring view or ... none at all” (p.7). This conclusion was supported by the fact that only 10% of the people surveyed were aware of the island’s existence (Steering Committee, Acanchi & HPI, 2006). Similarly, a few years later, Canavan (2015a, 2015b) noted that the IoM image was very limited and mostly unpropitious. These findings were persistent despite the advertising by the IoM government over the years to promote the Island as a place for business and investment. Since 2003, the IoM government has undertaken three major place branding campaigns, the “Freedom to flourish” campaign in 2003, “The IoM where you can” campaign in 2011, and the most recent one “Our Island: a special place to live and work” in 2017.

Much relatively recent research in the area of place marketing and branding have shown that in order for a place to appear attractive to businesses, talented workforce and investors, it is paramount to build place reputation, which cannot simply be treated as a matter of just marketing and advertising campaigns, rather it is an important part of national strategy (Anholt, 2008a; Cleave, Arku, Sadler, & Gilliland, 2016).

Following the launch of the most recent campaign, “Our Island: a special place to live and work” in 2017, the researcher enquired at the Department for Enterprise (DfE) in the IoM Government for any studies available upon which this campaign was based, and the person responding hinted that there was no preliminary study, despite the fact that the campaign had already started and everyone was working on it. Also, further enquiries were made to both the DfE and the Communications Office with regards to any information on the success (or not) of both “Freedom to flourish” and “Isle of Man, where you can” branding campaigns, however, the only information available was a detailed report (Steering Committee et al., 2006) presented to Tynwald (the IoM parliament) seeking approval of the budget of £500,000 for the “Freedom to Flourish” campaign, with £250,000 already paid to the consultants, but no further information on how the campaigns were rolled out or any measures or data to show whether the investments had paid off. The lack of data and measurements of the “Freedom to flourish” campaign was also one of the criticisms raised in a similar study on branding the IoM by Mackrell (2013).

Following the report of the Steering Committee in 2006, comments in local online forums (Manx Forums, Live Chat, 2006) criticised spending this amount of taxpayers money on a branding campaign. In an interview with Prof. Hugh Davidson, the Chairman of the Steering Committee of the “Freedom to flourish” campaign, it was highlighted that in 2003, when the work for the branding campaign started, very few people knew about place branding as practice which the members of the Steering Committee considered to be a new way of enhancing the reputation of the IoM. While the initiative had the support of the governments between 2003 -2006, after the elections on 2006, the new government did not see the campaign as beneficial so it was quietly pushed aside. Furthermore, the lack of understanding from the politicians meant that they could not articulate to the public why the money should be spent in such campaigns, hence the funding was cut and the campaign was not fully implemented or monitored, which somehow explains the lack of data for this campaign. In a business environment, Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) warn about the great risks of undertaking branding campaigns that would not be fully funded or supported throughout, therefore they strongly suggest that the brand manager should be the CEO of the company or somebody at the top of the business hierarchy, who will be in the business long term or has a long term vision. However, it is generally recognised that branding a place is not the same as branding a company, yet “the essentials are the same” (Olins, 2002, p. 167).

1.2 Research gap

The information collected during the preliminary enquiry in the previous section was the preamble leading in to conducting this research. Therefore the next logical step was generating a problem statement. According to Jacobs (2013) a problem statement has three functions: a) identify the existence of the problem, b) justify why does it matter to address the problem (Robinson, Saldanha, & McKoy, 2011, p.1325) and what value it creates (McEnerney, 2013), c) highlight the purpose of the study (Jacobs, 2013).

The previous section, outlines briefly the challenges facing the IoM and some of the current concerns of the IoM government in their efforts to maintaining the growth of the economy, through attraction of businesses and a talented workforce. Research (Florida, 2002; Mellander, Florida, & Stolarick, 2011; Stolarick, Mellander, & Florida, 2010) suggests that talented workers are sought after by many places and the decision to relocate depends very much on what the places have to offer to these individuals, thus placing the emphasis on how the places are perceived, what image and reputation they have built over the years. Given the situation in the IoM, from previous research it is evident that despite contiguous branding campaigns the IoM image has remained very limited and where it existed was not positive (Canavan, 2015a, 2015b; Steering Committee et al., 2006). This situation represents a

problem for the IoM and raises the questions: What is the current image of the IoM? What are the factors that have influenced creation of this current image? To what extent does the image of the IoM reflects its identity? To what degree has place marketing and branding helped shape the prevailing image of the IoM? How can place branding and marketing strategies help in improving the IoM image?

A review of the academic literature provides numerous definitions for place image and place identity. The high degree of incongruence found between definitions highlights the difficulties faced by the practitioners when it comes to operationalisation of the terms such as place identity, place image etcetera. Furthermore, while place branding and marketing has been shown to have an important impact on how people think, feel and talk about places, surprisingly frameworks that would help practitioners to implement the place branding and attempt to measure with certainty the impacts and outcomes of the place branding campaigns are yet to be agreed upon.

After narrowing the scope of the research into considering the place branding and marketing, and the associated factors impacting on place identity and place image in the context of the IoM, research on this area for places of similar size was considered. Research from Foroudi, Gupta, Kitchen, Foroudi and Nguyen (2016) and Govers, Go and Kumar (2007) provided insights into place branding and marketing practices in the United Arab Emirates while Ooi (2008) explored the example of Singapore. However, the IoM is distinctively different from both the UAE and Singapore, therefore what worked on these places would not necessarily work in the IoM. Robinson, Saldanha and McKoy (2011) suggest that when “results from studies might not be applicable to the population and/or setting of interest” (p.1327), it presents a “research gap” or an area where further research would be required. While the literature in the field of place branding and marketing suggests a number of areas where the research could be further expanded, this research was rather focused on addressing one particular gap in a particular context, in other words looking into identifying how place branding and marketing could help the IoM in their effort to attract businesses and a talented workforce. What value this research brings, is further discussed in the next section.

1.3 Proposed contribution

Previous section indicated the existence of the problem that the IoM is facing in attracting businesses and workforce and highlighted the gap identified in the literature with regards to a place branding framework that could help the IoM efforts. This way it fulfilled the first function of Jacobs’s (2013) problem statement. The second function, which relates to the contribution this particular research could make, is discussed in this section.

This research provides a specific case study, the IoM case study, where various variables can have an important but distinctively different impact in the way a very small place can position itself through place branding and marketing in order to compete with bigger and more powerful countries in the attraction of talented workforce and businesses.

One of the contributions of this research is expanding the discussion for defining place identity and image in the context of places with where the number of people relocating is higher than the number of the residents. With the rise of globalisation and increase in people's movements, how places identities are constructed and perceived needs re-examining.

This research contributes also by offering a rationale on the practical application of the Two-factor theory in branding the IoM. The use of the Two-factor Theory in classifying the place brand attributes can assist the place brand managers in the IoM not only in formulating their marketing strategy but primarily in identifying which characteristics of the IoM can be further enhanced in order for it to be a good place for business, with a great quality of life, for both current and future residents.

The issues of how to develop and manage place image are not unique to the IoM because, as many researchers have highlighted, the competition amongst countries for resources nowadays has placed the place image and reputation in the spotlight (Florida, 2002; Porter, 2011; Van Ham, 2002). Similarly place branding initiatives are not a new phenomenon; however establishing a framework that could be adapted in different contexts appears to be problematic and undertaking initiatives which cannot be evaluated for their effectiveness raises issues of accountability, especially when significant funds from tax payers' money are involved. Therefore some of the outcomes/ recommendations of this research could potentially be useful to practitioners in places of similar size and culture such as the Channel Islands.

This research is a Doctorate in Business and Administration (DBA), which is application oriented research with the focus to contribute to knowledge through proposing/developing practical solutions to current organisational problems (Graf, 2020). Part of the contribution of this research is a list of recommendations for the place brand practitioners in the IoM. As this research has tried to address an important issue for the IoM, the recommendations could potentially assist the practitioners in the IoM government in developing a branding and marketing strategy that could enable the IoM to enhance its image and as a result facilitate the process of attracting businesses and talented workforce.

While for the second function of Jacobs's (2013) problem statement, this research might provide value to the practitioners in the IoM and an additional intrinsic case study in the place branding field of

studies, for the third function of Jacobs's (2013) problem statement, which looks at how to address the problem or the purpose of the study, this research has attempted to address some of the issues related to the branding process in the IoM through the fulfilment of the aim and the objectives elaborated in the next section.

1.4 Research aim and objectives

Given this is a DBA, the aim is not a purely theoretical or abstract one; it is more about identifying how an understanding of the relationship between place identity, image and place branding might better inform strategies to enhance the image and reputation of the IoM and thereby help in attracting new talented individuals to the island.

Therefore, in order to achieve the aim of the research, a number of **objectives** were developed as below:

1. To analyse and compare the way in which the Isle of Man (IoM)'s identity and image are currently perceived and understood amongst business owners and talented people who currently live in the IoM
2. To analyse how the IoM is portrayed through the IoM government web-based communications aimed at businesses and talented people looking to relocate
3. To compare and contrast the way which the IoM is portrayed through government web based communications with the perceptions of the IoM held by the business people in the IoM
4. To evaluate how the adoption of place branding and marketing strategies might help to manage the alignment between the communicated image of the IoM and the perceptions of the business people, thus aiding the efforts to address the challenge of attracting new businesses and talented workforce to the IoM

1.5 Research Scope

Based on the aim and the objectives established in the previous section, the scope of this research is limited to exploring the identity of the IoM through the perception of the residents participating in this research. The aim of the research is to identify how an understanding of the relationship between place identity, image and place branding can better inform the strategies which can assist in attracting businesses and talented workforce. Therefore the sample of participants have been purposely selected from the business community and the IoM identity will be explored only from these business people's point of view. Places like people have many identities, however in this research were

considered only the identities, which relate the most to the business people. Other identities such as touristic, artistic or any other identities were considered out of scope.

As this is qualitative research looking at people's perceptions, opinions, website messages and comparing and contrasting amongst them, any quantitative measurements of the differences on opinions and perceptions was considered out of scope.

Places can be branded and marketed for different purposes, such as attraction of tourists, investments, talent or for political reasons. This research is focused only on the branding and marketing of the IoM related to the attraction of businesses and talented workforce, thus limiting the scope only to these areas.

1.6 Outline of methodology

The researcher approached the study from a social constructionist perspective (Berger & Luckmann, 1991; Cunliffe, 2011) - a philosophical approach which is congruent with the fact that place, place identity and place image are socially constructed concepts and branding and marketing is a socially constructed paradigm (Palmer & Ponsonby, 2002). From this perspective it was entirely logical that the research followed a qualitative methodological approach.

Following an interpretivist theoretical perspective allowed for exploration of the subjective meanings and perceptions of the research participants about the IoM and at the same time allowed the interpretation by the researcher of the messages delivered by the web communications. The case study design provided a well suited methodology to the study of the place branding phenomenon in the context of the IoM. Case study methodology requires data triangulation which was achieved through the use of two data sources: the interviews and the data from the web-based communications of the IoM government.

Data were collected through in-depth unstructured interviews and from IoM governments websites designed to support attraction of businesses and talented workforce. The sampling strategy combined purposive non-probabilistic and snowball sampling techniques for the interviews, for which a sample of 15 business entrepreneurs, talented employees and government officials was selected, and purposive non-probabilistic sampling for the websites. Interview data were analysed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six step thematic data analysis method. For web-based communications the analyses were split into text analysis and image analysis. Textual data were analysed using Elo and Kyngäs' (2008) qualitative content analysis and images were analysed using a combination of iconographic and semiotic analysis (Van Leeuwen, 2011).

In order to ensure validity of the research, specifically ecological validity (Cicourel, 1982) the in-depth unstructured interviews were focused at capturing people's perceptions in real life context. Furthermore plausibility and credibility, two very important features supporting the validity of qualitative research (Hammersley, 2005), were addressed through clear links between the conclusions and findings and were also evidenced through the samples of the analytical process in the appendices.

Ethical considerations consisted of close adherence to the eight principles of the Chartered Association of the Business Schools (CABS) Ethics Guide 2015 which is the basis of the University of Chester (UoC), Faculty of Business and Management Ethical Guidelines. Amongst others, emphasis was placed upon protecting the participants' data, by anonymising the interview data as per GDPR guideline, and observing the copyrights of the data collected through the website.

1.7 Chapters introduction

This research is organised in six chapters. **Chapter one** has firstly given a broad outline and context of the practice issue that is going to be explored in details in the subsequent chapters. Following the practice issue, this chapter introduces the research gap and the research question, which answering in turn, became the aim and objectives of the research. The outline of the methodology suggests the processes and methods followed to enable the achievement of the objectives. This first chapter concludes by highlighting the contribution to theory and practice and giving an overview to the structure of this research. **Chapter two** attempts to provide a systematic view on the treatment of the main concepts and issues in the literature which also help provide a perspective into the complexity of the phenomenon under study. **Chapter three** provides the rationale of the chosen inductive approach following a social constructionist philosophy and demonstrates the suitability of the use of a case study method for this research. Details of data collection and analysis process are used to evince the methodological rigour of the research process. The product of the analysis process is presented in **Chapter four**, the findings. The findings are organised in themes and subthemes that were generated from both data sets, the interviews and the website content. Further the themes and subthemes of the interviews are contrasted and compared with those of the websites. **Chapter five** is dedicated to the discussion of the findings. This chapter not only discusses the findings but also expands the contrast into the theoretical context (Anzul, Downing, Ely, & Vinz, 2001), in order to identify any possible similarity or difference with already established theoretical frameworks that could potentially aid practical application. The insights derived from the discussion chapter, are the basis that inform **Chapter six**. This chapter demonstrates how the current research has achieved its objectives in the form of the conclusions and reflections, and how it has fulfilled its aim. Following the conclusions, a

set of recommendations are generated and the limitations of these recommendations and of the research as a whole are identified.

2 Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Before moving on to explore people's perceptions about the IoM or analyse how the IoM is portrayed in web-media communications, it was deemed important to first establish the theoretical underpinning of the relevant concepts, notably place identity, place image, place branding and marketing. These concepts will be explored by the current research in the context of the IoM. The literature review will also examine whether any theoretical frameworks or models might inform the creation and practical application of place branding strategies in the context of the IoM. This chapter seeks to provide a comprehensive review of the treatment in literature of these main concepts. The chapter is organised in three main parts. The first part describes comprehensively the literature review approach in terms of the literature search and the review method. The second part of this chapter comprises the systematic analysis of 185 journal articles and books, which was conducted by applying thematic analysis methodology (Harden & Thomas, 2008). The chapter is concluded by the third part which highlights how the insights provided by this literature review will inform the rest of this research.

2.2 Literature review approach

2.2.1 Literature search

This literature review aims to evaluate the extent to which an understanding of place branding and marketing strategies might better inform our appreciation of the way in which the IoM might, and has to date sought to make itself a more attractive location for business and workforce. In scoping out this literature review the aim was to explore works that would offer a view, as comprehensive as possible, of relevant theories and debates around areas including place identity, place image, place marketing and place branding which are being adopted and diffusing into ongoing place/ destination branding and marketing practice. Therefore a systematic approach in synthesising some of the core literature in this field (Denyer, Tranfield, & Van Aken, 2008) was adopted for this literature review.

The process of locating the literature started with searching in several databases (ProQuest (ABI Inform Global), Elsevier (Science Direct), EBSCO Business Source Elite and Google Scholar) using the keywords 'image' and 'identity', which are also key terms of the research aim. This search brought over four million results. Search results are shown in Table 1.

To narrow down the search results to a manageable number, it was necessary to apply a number of filters to the search criteria which included discipline filters or type of publication filters. Discipline filters categorise sources into academic disciplines such as history, geography, mathematics and so on. However, identifying the research discipline which studies the image and identity in the context of place attractiveness was not straightforward. Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten (2006) suggest that image, identity and reputation can be defined through an interdisciplinary framework which draws from psychology, organisational research and marketing. However, association of the image and identity with the place adds another dimension for which Hall (1997) strongly suggests that the study of places should expand across geography, tourism and marketing disciplines. Similarly Lucarelli and Brorström (2013) consider place branding an interdisciplinary area of study. As a result, the discipline filters were set to include marketing, tourism, sociology, geography and psychology leaving out the organisational research, as it was considered irrelevant at this stage of this research.

To ensure credibility of the source materials, selection criteria for the type of publication were set for journal articles, scholarly and peer reviewed (Hannes, 2011). Several combinations of keywords, including the use of Boolean operators were used to narrow down even further (Fink, 2010) as shown in Table 1.

So aiming to narrow down the search from thousands of articles to a more manageable level, but at the same time avoiding having very few articles, the search criteria was modified to specify the keywords 'place AND image' as subject terms, by still maintaining the discipline criteria. On this occasion 718 were generated results in the EBSCO database. Similarly 'place AND identity' generated 763 results in the ProQuest database. A further combination of 'place' AND 'image' AND 'identity' specified as subject terms brought the results down to 29 in Google Scholar, 149 in Elsevier Science Direct and negligible in the other databases. An initial review of the titles identified 21 journal articles which relate to place image and place identity, while others were related to tourism branding, tourism events or the identity of particular groups within a country's population.

These 21 articles were read and used as base for snowballing (or pearl growing), which is a strategy that aims at identifying authors that were cited in a particular work (Booth, Papaioannou, & Sutton, 2016). The inclusion criteria was set for articles which discussed specifically the place image, identity, branding and marketing in any of the disciplinary areas specified in the initial research (marketing, tourism, geography, psychology, sociology). Bibliographic methods like co-citation and bibliographic coupling were used to identify works that were cited together in the same articles and publications that referenced the same works because they reveal studies which are interconnected or belong to the same research area (Vogel & Güttel, 2013). For example Anholt and Konecnik Ruzzier and De

Chernatony appeared together. Similarly, many authors refer to Echtner and Ritchie, Freire, Lucarelli, Zenker or McElroy. Further search for these authors in the citation index of the Web of Science, revealed the number of times their articles were cited, which supported the selection decision. Forward snowballing benefited from this exercise because looking further into the list of the articles which have cited these authors, helped identify works that are more recent.

Keywords	Google Scholar	ProQuest	Science Direct	EBSCO, Business Source Elite	Wiley
Image	8,710,000	2,250,180	3,197,723	210,040	1,559,297
Identity	4,420,000	1,022,024	967,207	93,513	3,619,872
Country image	5,640,000	634,387	303,177	1,551	230,096
Place image	5,990,000	818,831	1,003,453	671	836,548
Place identity	4,450,000	500,020	372,962	830	1,954,672
Place marketing	3,350,000	757,104	148,322	5,870	509,025
Place reputation	1,970,000	423,679	83,156	215	109,867
Country brand	2,910,000	588,328	76,255	3,158	66,791
Place identity AND small islands	794,000	5,111	26,324	1	158,868
Place image AND small islands	1,340,000	4,819	67,563	3	69,305
Small country image	4,730,000	20,579	4,545	6	160,869
Isle of Man AND image	138,000	405	96	7	23,091
Isle of Man AND identity	123,000	426	36	13	57,695
Place AND image AND identity	3,990,000	17,737	3,302	618	595,914
Place AND image (subject terms)	444	69	9,506	718	85
Place AND identity (subject terms)	3,660	763	2,260	30	212
Place AND image AND identity (subject terms)	29	1	149	2	2
Journals peer reviewed only					
Subject filters applied					

Table 1 Keyword search

The search process has been summarised through the Prisma Diagram (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, & Altman, 2009) below.

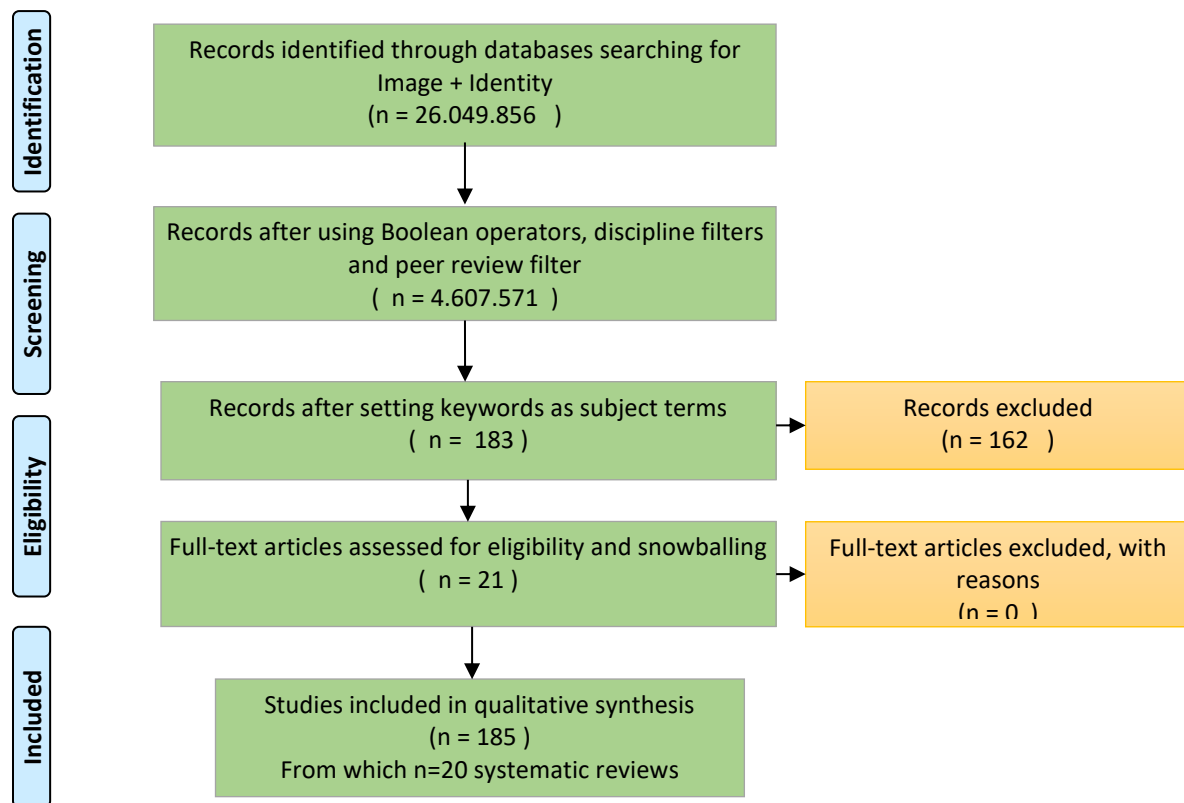


Figure 1 Prisma Diagram

(Moher D, Liberati A, Tetzlaff J, Altman DG, The PRISMA Group (2009). Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses: The PRISMA Statement)

One of the “extrinsic factors” (Booth et al., 2016, p. 147) used to assess the quality of papers, was the journals’ ranking on Chartered Association of Business Schools (CABS) and Australian Business Deans Council (ABDC) databases (Stokes & Wall, 2014). It was decided that the majority of the articles from journals included in the CABS and ABCD databases, should be from level 3, 4 and 4* journals of ABS database (equally B, A and A* from ABDC database), while the articles from journals not listed in CABS or ABDC, were taken into consideration based on the number of times they were cited.

2.2.2 Review method

Based on the aims of the literature review, conducting a systematic review using thematic analysis was deemed an appropriate method to explore the literature available in this area of studies. This method consists of extracting the main concepts and findings from the research studies which are then tabulated to identify, translate into one another, analyse the emerging themes and as a result produce a synthesis of these studies (Denyer et al., 2008; Harden & Thomas, 2008).

2.3 Literature analysis

The image, identity and attractiveness of a place have been the subjects of interest by many researchers in the last few decades; the reason being a constant competition between places for investments, talented workforce, tourists (Acharya & Rahman, 2016; Anholt, 2011; Kotler & Gertner, 2002; Porter, 1990). From the 185 sources selected for this review, chronologically one article was published respectively in each of the years, except 1980 has two: 1959, 1965, 1976, 1979, 1980, 1980, 1983, 1989; 11 are published between 1990 and 1999 and the rest (166) are published after the year 2000. The reason that the majority of the articles have appeared post year 2000 is that as noted by many authors (Cleave & Arku, 2017; Green, Grace, & Perkins, 2016; Hanna & Rowley, 2008; Kaneva, 2011) the research in place branding and marketing has experienced a great expansion during this time. However, the articles published post 2000, regularly referred to seminal works published earlier for various definitions and concepts, as a result it was deemed appropriate to include the original articles in this review.

It was interesting to note that 20 articles from the 185 sources identified, were systematic reviews in areas related to place image, place marketing and place branding, with all of them except two published after year 2010. As systematic reviews are considered an efficient and highly reliable way of synthesising knowledge (Denyer et al., 2008; Mulrow, 1994), the discussion will start with an overview of these 20 systematic reviews identified during the search process.

2.3.1 Overview of systematic reviews

The systematic reviews identified, belong to the same wide field of study which interlinks place identity, place image, place branding and place marketing, however, they explore different areas such as: destination image (DI), country image (CI), place identity, place marketing, place branding and marketing, place/nation branding and city branding. Table 3 lists the 20 systematic reviews in chronological order within their specific area of study (coded in different colours as shown in the Table 2 below). It also includes the number of articles in each review, the time period covered (when specified in the article) and the main findings as identified by the authors.

	Destination Image
	Country Image
	Place Identity
	Place Marketing
	Place branding and marketing
	Place/nation branding
	City branding

Table 2 Research areas

Review title	Author/s	Year	No. articles	Period	Systematic Review Findings
Destination Image analysis - A review of 142 papers from 1973 to 2000	Steven Pike	2002	142	1973 - 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is not yet an accepted theory to replace the multi-attribute models. • DI construct is difficult to measure • Consumers' overall perceptions of a destination is binary
Destination Image Towards a Conceptual Framework	Martina G. Gallarza, Irene Gil Saura, Hayde'e Caldero'n Garcí'a	2002	65	1971- 1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studies are analysed based on three dimensions: object, subject and attributes • Conceptualization and Dimensions - no consensus on the process and nature of DI formation • DI Formation Process – static and dynamic • Assessment and Measurement of DI - complexity in measuring perceptions, inaccurate comparisons • Distance and DI Change Over Time. • Active and Passive Role of Residents in Image Study. • DI Management Policies.
Destination Image: A Meta-Analysis of 2000–2007 Research	Svetlana Stepchenkova, Juline E. Mills	2010	152	2000- 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DI definition- lack of consensus among scholars due to the complexity, subjectivity, and elusive nature of the concept. • Area has become interdisciplinary - sociocultural, media and communications, DI and self-concept, consumer behaviour and marketing • Still no consensus on methodologies for measurement of the behavioural aspect of DI.
An examination of the status and evolution of country image research	Irene R.R. Lu, Louise A. Heslop, D. Roland Thomas	2015	554	1978 - 2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and influence of CI articles is in decline • Upward trend for articles from outside North America, collaboration is constant • Methodological concerns: poor replication and questionable generalizability of findings

	Ernest Kwan				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nine themes identified
Sense of place and place identity: Review of neuroscientific evidence	Chris Lengen, Thomas Kistemann	2012	79		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encoding of environmental information in the perception and memory system • The role of attention and emotion in the encoding process • Recognition of places based on the perception and memory system • Navigation and spatial orientation based on the recognition of places • The significance of emotion in the place recognition process • Neuroscience has studied place identity in respect of individual but not substantiated in the culture or higher levels yet
Rethinking place marketing – a literature review	Elin Berglund, Krister Olsson	2010			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two divergent starting points place and marketing. • place as a starting point tend to be empirical and/or critical in approach, studies with marketing as a starting point tend to be prescriptive and/or conceptual, • Identifies ten themes • Most empirical and critical research in this field of development are dealing with place selling and place promotion, not with place marketing.
Unfolding and configuring two decades of research and publications on place marketing and place branding	David Gertner	2011	212	1990 - 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The field has not reached a point where we can say that a robust theory is under construction. • Dominance of qualitative anecdotal evidence. • The field must make an effort to identify variables that might play a role in the attitudes toward city brands, nation brands and so on.
Place branding & place marketing 1976–2016: A	Renaud Vuignier	2017	1172	1976 - 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articles are classified into categories and subcategories according to disciplinary approach, method used and perspective adopted.

multidisciplinary literature review					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The field suffers from a lack of conceptual clarity, diverging definitions and a weak theoretical foundation. • The field lacks empirical evidence and explanatory articles • Six important themes identified individually and others grouped together • The review underscores the literature's lack of interest in the political and institutional contexts of places.
Nation Branding: Toward an Agenda for Critical Research	Nadia Kaneva	2011	186	1997-2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research is split in three categories, borrowing from Bell (1976): technical economic - political - cultural. • A reflexive conceptual map with four types of research orientations across disciplines. • Directions for future research work should be informed by critical theories on the global phenomenon of nation branding.
Problematising place branding research: A meta-theoretical analysis of the literature	Andrea Lucarelli, Sara Brorström	2013	292		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researchers disagree on how the concept of place branding should be defined. • Literature is categorised according to different ontological and epistemological approaches • Most of the articles follow objectivist approach, driven by production and consumer-oriented perspective
A review of place branding methodologies in the new millennium	Chung-shing Chan, Lawal M. Marafa	2013	82	2000-2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dominance of qualitative research approaches in most of the specific topic areas in place branding including place identity, projected images, place offerings, marketing and communications, and stakeholder relationships. • Most research is individual case studies • There is lack of integrated research approaches • Relatively low explanatory power of statistical applications in some studies.

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed- method or more diversified quantitative approaches may yield insightful future research opportunities
Branding places with social problems: A systematic review (2000-2013)	Shanon Jones, Krzysztof Kubacki	2014	25	2000-2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three main themes: place branding strategies, types of social problems and the role of policy development in addressing the problems • Place branding strategies can be successful for places with negative images, in particular social problems; however, it is an all-encompassing process that cannot focus on only one aspect (that is, promotion or tourism) • It is not necessary to remove a social problem before place branding benefits can be seen
Placing place branding: an analysis of an emerging research field in human geography	Ida Andersson	2014	86	2000-2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place branding in human geography has solid conceptual frameworks and uses theoretical approaches. • Place branding research can move beyond a routine explanation of the adaption of corporate branding to places, into a wider understanding of societal, political, spatial and economical structures that in interplay create what is known to be place branding. • geographers, by studying place branding using various conceptions of place as defined in human geography, are making distinctive conceptual contributions to the multi-disciplinary research field of place branding
Place branding research: a thematic review and future research agenda	Alok Acharya , Zillur Rahman	2016	147	2004 - 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articles are categorized according to various criteria such as research themes, bibliographic data, method of study, method of data collection, types of data analysis techniques used, conceptual/theoretical frameworks proposed and geographical locations focused • Most of the articles are based on conceptual, case, and qualitative studies; • Nine themes were identified • Place brand identity emerged as a major research theme in all studies.

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place branding field still lacks sound theoretical background.
Nation branding for foreign direct investment: an Integrative review and directions for research and strategy	Nicolas Papadopoulos, Leila Hamzaoui-Essoussi, Alia El Banna	2016			<p>Four main areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision making and location choice in foreign direct investment Nation branding: promises and challenges Nation branding for investment attraction Lack of consensus, as to the principal factors that affect investor and nation decisions and actions, resulting in several knowledge gaps that need to be addressed by new research along the lines suggested in the study.
Putting a number on place: a systematic review of place branding influence	Evan Cleave, Godwin Arku	2017	39	1988-2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compatibility between place branding and human geography Place branding influence to be conceptualized through the sense-of-place which has implications for place equity and consumer decision-making. Place branding influence can be conceptualised through place equity, revealing potential performance indicators for its quantification. Place branding influence can be categorized along three interrelated dimensions: adaptiveness, effectiveness and efficiency
Main areas of place branding scientific research - bibliometric analysis	Ewa Glinska, Ewelina Julita Tomaszewska	2017	415	2000-2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The main disciplines conducting research in place branding: tourist destination branding, country branding, city branding, place branding strategy and cultural heritage. New research fields which are developing the most dynamically within the area of place branding: place brand equity, stakeholders' involvement and the role of cultural heritage in the place branding process.

City branding: a state-of-the-art review of the research domain	Andrea Lucarelli, Per Olof Berg	2011	217	1998 - 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criticism for applying a mono-disciplinary perspective in a field which is essentially multi-disciplinary. • Three perspectives were identified emerging across academic disciplines (producing, appropriation (consuming), and criticizing city branding). • The empirical foundation of the domain is based on anecdotic evidence from single case studies.
Synthesis of City Branding Literature (1988–2014) as a Research Domain	Senay Oguztimur, Ulun Akturan	2015	147	1988 - 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The qualitative methods are commonly used. • There is a tendency to describe the data but not to interpret the relations between the concepts and theories. Therefore, the knowledge is idiographic. • Propose 4 categories of branding themes
City branding research and practice: An integrative review	Amelia Green, Debra Grace and Helen Perkins	2016	134		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map the development of city brand management over five waves - primitive attempts to adjust what cities mean to people, boosterish city pro- motion, entrepreneurial urban governance, formalised city marketing, a rhetorical city brand focus. • Identify four major waves in city branding research: (i) initial possibilities, (ii) application and adaption of existing branding theory, (iii) development of a critical lens and (iv) progressive approaches that intersect with the co-creation branding paradigm • The divergent evolutionary paths of city branding research and practice contribute to an overall disconnect between scholars and practitioners.

Table 3 Systematic Reviews details and findings

A common thread in most of the reviews was a general criticism related to the quality of research, in the sense that the area is lacking use of theoretical models and frameworks, and well-established and accepted definitions. In understanding these systematic reviews it was important to recognise the disciplinary background the authors were coming from, as this shapes the theoretical view they draw from, and as Lucarelli and Berg (2011) point out, some of the researchers were “applying a mono-disciplinary perspective in a field which is essentially multi-disciplinary” (p.10).

The main insights coming from the systematic reviews above are as below:

- There is a lack of theoretical underpinning and there is a need for a stronger methodological approach in the research in the area of place branding, place marketing, place image and identity
- There is a lack of clarity in the definition of the core concepts: place, place image, place identity, destination image
- There is confusion between place marketing, place branding and place promotion from both theoretical and operational point of view
- The use of critical theories is becoming an imperative as part of a holistic and multidisciplinary approach in place branding and marketing

These insights were used as a guide for the entire research in terms of ensuring a clear methodological approach, to clarify the basis of the definitions used and to apply the appropriate theories. As well, a multidisciplinary approach appeared to be necessary (Brown et al., 2006; Hall, 1997; Vuignier, 2017; Warnaby & Medway, 2013) to not only gain an understanding of the issues, but also to inform the outcomes from both a theoretical and practical point of view.

Besides the insights in the state of the research in place branding and marketing, the discussions in the systematic reviews have assisted the identification of a number of themes in the articles reviewed, which are discussed in the next part of this review.

2.3.2 Analysis and discussion of the literature

As highlighted from the insights in the previous section, the field of place branding and marketing has still a long way to go in terms of consolidating the definitions and theoretical grounds of the field. However, looking deeper into the insights from the systematic reviews, it creates the impression that all the issues identified have a strong influence upon one another.

The aim of the research, which seeks to explore the role of place identity and image in the place branding strategy in order to enhance the image of the IoM and assist in attracting talented workforce and businesses, provided the starting point of the initial analysis of the systematic reviews; moreover, it provided a thematic structure that was utilised for the thematic analysis of all the literature selected for this research. So to be able to evaluate whether branding and marketing strategies can help the IoM become an attractive place for businesses and workforce, it is important to measure what impact the marketing and branding strategies can have on the place and their target audiences. However, before measuring the impact of place branding and marketing it is important to identify whether there is an impact and what that impact is or involves. This leads to the question: what is/are being impacted or influenced and what are their characteristics, how can we define them.



Figure 2 Thematic structure

Table 4 shows the research discipline (highlighted in different colour fonts), the articles' titles, authors, publication date, authors' (or their institutions') country and the themes generated from the systematic review. It is noticeable that even though the systematic reviews come from different disciplines, using a different lens in their analysis, they are discussing similar themes. Background colours are maintained as in Table 3. Articles within each area of study are organised chronologically.

Discipline	Review title	Author/s	Year	Country	Definitions	Measure	Impacts
Tourism	Destination image analysis - A review of 142 papers from 1973 to 2000	Steven Pike	2002	New Zealand	X	X	
Tourism	Destination Image Towards a Conceptual Framework	Martina Gallarza, Irene Gil Saura, Hayde'e Caldero'n García	2002	Spain	X	X	X
Tourism	Destination Image: A Meta-Analysis of 2000–2007 Research	Svetlana Stepchenkova, Juline E. Mills	2010	USA		X	X
Marketing	An examination of the status and evolution of country image research	Irene R.R. Lu, Louise A.Heslop, D. Roland Thomas and Ernest Kwan	2016	Canada			X
Neuroscience	Sense of place and place identity: Review of neuroscientific evidence	Charis Lengen, Thomas Kistemann	2012	Germany	X		
Geography	Rethinking place marketing – a literature review	Elin Berglund, Krister Olsson	2010	Sweden		X	
Marketing	Unfolding and configuring two decades of research and publications on place marketing and place branding	David Gertner	2011	USA	X		X
Marketing	Place branding & place marketing 1976–2016: A multidisciplinary literature review	Renaud Vuignier	2017	Switzerland	X	X	X
Social Sciences	Nation Branding: Toward an Agenda for Critical Research	Nadia Kaneva	2011	USA			X
Marketing	Problematising place branding research: A meta-theoretical analysis of the literature	Andrea Lucarelli, Sara Brorström	2013	Sweden	X		X
Marketing	A review of place branding methodologies in the new millennium	Chung-shing Chan, Lawal M. Marafa	2013	Hong Kong	X		X
Marketing	Branding places with social problems: A systematic review (2000-2013)	Shanon Jones, Krzysztof Kubacki	2014	Australia			X
Geography	Placing place branding: an analysis of an emerging research field in human geography	Ida Andersson	2014	Sweden	X		X
Marketing	Place branding research: a thematic review and future research agenda	Alok Acharya, Zillur Rahman	2016	India	X	X	X
Marketing	Nation branding for foreign direct investment: an Integrative review and directions for research and strategy	Nicolas Papadopoulos, Leila Hamzaoui-Essoussi, Alia El Banna	2016	Canada + UK		X	X
Geography	Putting a number on place: a systematic review of place branding influence	Evan Cleave, Godwin Arku	2017	Canada		X	X
Marketing	Main areas of place branding scientific research - bibliometric analysis	Glinska, Ewelina Julita Tomaszewska	2017	Poland			X
Marketing	City branding: a state-of-the-art review of the research domain	Andrea Lucarelli, Per Olof Berg	2011	Sweden	X		X
Marketing	Synthesis of City Branding Literature (1988–2014) as a Research Domain	Senay Oguztimur, Ulun Akturan	2015	Turkey		X	X
Marketing	City branding research and practice: An integrative review	Amelia Green, Debra Grace, Helen Perkins	2016	Australia		X	X

Table 4 Systematic reviews common themes

The lack of consensus in establishing definitions infers that there are a number of definitions for concepts such as place, place identity and place image, but the researchers are struggling to find common grounds; this hampers the operationalisation of these concepts. As identified in the research objectives, the concepts of place identity and place image are core to this research, therefore synthesising the discussions that surround this theme will help establish the foundations for this research.

Other insights from the systematic reviews highlight the fact that confusion about the role of different functions, notably marketing, branding and promotion, influences the mediation between image and identity. At the same time, the concerns raised about the necessity of application of critical theories, draw attention to the impacts place marketing and branding have on the various audiences and their behaviours, which lead to further discussions about accountability and measures of these impacts. These are very important factors that this research is aiming to identify, as a result the discussions around these themes and subthemes will help to gain a greater understanding of the issues and inform the outcomes of the research.

Analysis of the systematic reviews has also pointed to a lack of a strong theoretical underpinning for the argumentation in the research in the field and the use of weak methodological approaches or reliance on anecdotal evidence (Andersson, 2014; Anholt, 2008a; Chan & Marafa, 2013; Lucarelli & Berg, 2011), all of which can lead to unfounded conclusions, erroneous evaluations and make the formulation and application of the theory a haphazard process. While this insight might appear irrelevant to the questions this research is aiming to address, this is an important factor to consider when conducting the research and selecting the articles that will be consulted throughout as this will impact the quality of this research.

Taking into consideration all the factors and insights derived from the initial analysis of the systematic reviews above and the research aim, another 165 articles were selected for this research's systematic review in order to capture the necessary knowledge that would facilitate achievement of the research objectives.

Overall a wider review and detailed analysis of a total of 185 articles (including the 20 systematic reviews) suggested three core themes and a number of subthemes which collectively appeared to broadly capture and explain the variation in emphasis across the works, and are listed below.

Theme 1. The importance of conceptualising and defining place identity and place image

Subtheme 1.1. Place is a complex dynamic concept

Subtheme 1.2. Sense of place, place identity and place attachment are different concept

Subtheme 1.3. The search for a place image framework continues

Theme 2. Place identity, place image, place branding and marketing interconnected through impact

Subtheme 2.1. The impact of the image and identity on places

Subtheme 2.2. The factors that influence the image and the identity of a place

Subtheme 2.3. The role of branding and marketing in relation to places

Subtheme 2.4. Place branding as a new area of research

Subtheme 2.5. Stakeholders' role and importance in place branding

Subtheme 2.6. Branding should be part of place development strategies

Theme 3. The complexity of place branding makes it difficult to measure the impact

Subtheme 3.1. The importance of identifying the brand components and the relationship between them

Subtheme 3.2. Place brand equity/value – the outcome of place branding process

Subtheme 3.3. Place brand image – part of place brand equity

The themes and subthemes identified are explored further in the next sections with the aim to gain a better understanding of the debates and established knowledge.

2.3.2.1 Theme 1. The importance of conceptualising and defining place identity and place image

This theme encapsulates the debates surrounding the conceptualisation and the defining of the terms place, place identity and place image, identification of their components and processes/conditions that trigger their formation. While every systematic review above has not spared the criticism in the lack of definitions and the clarity of concepts, further exploration of this theme will provide some insights as to what the debates are and why there is this lack of consensus. For this reason the next section is dedicated to the discussions about three main concepts (subthemes): place, place identity and place image.

Subtheme 1.1. Place is a complex dynamic concept

Exploring this strand of the literature, one subtheme that clearly emerged was that of the complexity and dynamism of the concept of 'place', which was examined from a number of disciplinary perspectives including geography, neurosciences, psychology, sociology and marketing. The discussion expands from the physical, spatial, geographical territories with borders, to the social phenomena or social constructions and meanings that reside and evolve within these confined areas (Kalandides, 2011; Massey, 1994; Roosvall, 2017; Tuan, 1979; Warnaby & Medway, 2013), to the individual's brain. According to neuropsychological sciences, the human brain has cells dedicated to places and spatial information which are activated by environmental triggers (Lengen & Kistemann, 2012).

Perhaps the most common area of agreement found within the literature lay in the fact that the place should be considered as a dynamic, fluid concept (Cresswell & Hoskins, 2008; Kalandides, 2011; Massey, 1994; Warnaby & Medway, 2013), but vague at the same time (Hauge, 2007). There are a wide range of place definitions which mostly stem from the traits, components or dimensions that various authors associate to the place (Cresswell & Hoskins, 2008; Kalandides, 2011; Massey, 1994; Roosvall, 2017; Tuan, 1979; Warnaby & Medway, 2013). Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) base their discussion on L  pple's (1991) and later Kalandides' (2011) discussion of five components of place: materiality, practices, institutions, representation and power. In addition, some authors including Cresswell and Hoskins (2008), Warnaby and Medway (2013) support Agnew's (2015) three dimensions of place as location, locale and sense of place. Agnew (2015) argues that location represents the "macro-order" of the places in relation to other places, locale represents the place in terms of where everyday life happens, and sense of place is the "subjective orientation that can be engendered by living in a place" (p.6). Agnew (2015) also suggests that this definition of sense of place is nothing but what geosociology considers as the "identity produced by the place" (p.6). The sense of place and place identity have engendered a wide academic discussion which has emerged as a subtheme of its own and is explored further in the next section.

Subtheme 1.2. Sense of place, place identity and place attachment are different concepts

Following on from Agnew's (2015) ideas on place identity and sense of place, it appears that in most of the works cited in the previous paragraph, besides "the material fabric of place" (Cresswell & Hoskins, 2008, p.395), place identity is considered one of the most important elements of place (Fran  ois Lecompte, Trelohan, Gentric, & Aquilina, 2017; Kalandides, 2011; Massey, 1994; Relph, 1976). Furthermore, place identity has emerged as one of the most argued about subthemes of the

main theme which explores place definitions and conceptualisation. Place identity, place attachment and the sense of place are terms that some authors use interchangeably (François Lecompte et al., 2017; Giuliani, 2003; Kalandides, 2011; Massey, 1994). Despite the interchangeable use of the terms, some academics tend to highlight the distinctions and identify the relationship between them (Hernández, Hidalgo, Salazar-Laplace, & Hess, 2007; Knez, 2005; Lewicka, 2008; Lindstedt, 2011). All the three terms represent relationships of people with places. While the sense of place is experiencing the place through our senses (Agnew, 2015; Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1979), and place attachment is an emotional link with the place (Giuliani, 2003; Kalandides, 2011; Knez, 2005; Lengen & Kistemann, 2012), what constitutes place identity is an open debate, with over 25 different definitions and descriptions only in the 185 sources of this literature review.

In an attempt to give clarity, it appears some authors link place identity to community related features such as history, culture, lifestyle (Harrison, 2002; Keillor & Hult, 1999; Lewicka, 2008; Mayes, 2008; Skinner & Kubacki, 2007). Whereas others consider place identity a process (Agnew, 2015; Hernández et al., 2007; Kalandides, 2011; Kavartzis & Hatch, 2013; Massey, 1994), even though there is no congruence in the description of the process by the authors.

However, at this point the discussion is split in two directions: adding to layers of complexity it is clear some authors discuss place identity at the level of the individual person, while others as the identity of a place, where place embodies all the characteristics discussed in the previous paragraphs (Lewicka, 2008). Kalandides (2011) adds to this debate a list of six different uses of the term place identity:

- “(1) place identity as part of individual (human) identity;
- (2) place identity as formative of group identity;
- (3) mental representations of place by an individual;
- (4) group perceptions of place;
- (5) identification of a group with a territory;
- (6) place identity as a sense of place, “character”, “personality” and distinctiveness” (p.30).

In environmental psychology, place identity is defined as clusters of “valenced cognitions about physical settings” (Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1983, p.74) which are linked to social and cultural settings where the individual lives (Hauge, 2007; Lengen & Kistemann, 2012). This view seems to resonate with Massey’s (1994) view in geography where amongst others, place identity is about social relations. While it appears to be some incoherence in the discussion about the relationship between social identity and place identity (Hauge, 2007; Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996), many authors (Hauge, 2007; Lengen & Kistemann, 2012; Proshansky et al., 1983; Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996) agree that place identity is part of self-identity of an individual person.

Tuan's (1979) suggestion that places have a personality “acquired ... through prolonged interaction between nature and man, ... which evokes awe and affection” (p.409) and they have a distinct character reflected in the everyday reality or “the genius loci” (Norberg-Schulz, 1980), appears to be supported by Kavaratzis and Kalandides' (2015) view that places have identity, suggesting that the identity of a place is a characteristic of that place, is “its distinctiveness or specificity” (p.1373), yet places do not have one single identity (Massey, 1994; Ren & Blichfeldt, 2011). This view on place identity contradicts the view in environmental psychology which sees place identity as a part of self-identity of a person (Proshansky et al., 1983; Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996). This view also contradicts Kalandides (2011) very own assertion that “transposition of identity from humans to place... can only be understood as a metaphor” (p.37) and metaphors are subject to individual's interpretation (Davies & Chun, 2003). On the other hand Kavaratzis and Hatch's (2013) place identity definition, as a dialectic process of internal and external views, appears to be a transposition from human to place of Proshansky's et al. (1983) definition of self-identity of the individual. Alaux, Serval and Zeller (2015) suggest that the identity of a place represents the identity of its actors. Haslam, Reicher and Platow (2008) suggest that identity according to social identity theory is generated from the belonging to a particular group of people with similar values or interests; place could be one of them according to Dematteis (as cited in Kalandides, 2011) and Zenker and Beckmann (2013). Massey (1994), however, treats the identification of the place with the group as “misidentification”(p.152).

The systematic review of Lengen and Kistemann (2012) concedes in the fact that while the research in neurosciences has already converged in relation to place identity at individual person's level, is yet to substantiate at higher levels like culture or communities. Diversity in definitions and viewpoints appears to support Kalandides' (2011) suggestion that defining place identity is an impossible task because the use of metaphors instead of definitions is a recipe for confusion (Davies & Chun, 2003). After reviewing the discussion in place identity, the review will progress into exploring the views in place image.

[Subtheme 1.3. The search for a place image framework continues](#)

Reynolds (1965) concept of image as “a mental construct of few selected impressions” (p.69) created by the customers has been widely supported by many other authors in the area of place or destination image (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Gartner, 1994; Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013; Zavattaro, 2013). However, O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy (2000) argue that image is more than “a picture in the head” (p.57), rather a combination of beliefs, claims and pictorial views which change over time. Numerous authors have studied the notion of image in the context of “destination image”, which according to Hanna and Rowley (2008) refers purely to the place image in relation to tourism.

Yet other authors explored place image in the context of place image that can attract business, capital, talented workforce (Acharya & Rahman, 2016; Kotler & Gertner, 2002), considering tourism only as part of the overall attraction.

Over the years many authors aimed to identify the components of the place image in varied disciplines such as psychology, tourism, marketing (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Beerli & Martín, 2004; Brijs, Bloemer, & Kasper, 2011; Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Gartner, 1994; Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2016; O'Shaughnessy & O'Shaughnessy, 2000; Reynolds, 1965; Roth & Diamantopoulos, 2009) and there is a congruence of thinking amongst various disciplines as far as the psychological components are concerned, precisely: the cognitive, affective and conative components. Even though many authors have tried to identify further subcomponents or different dimensions such as geopolitical, socioeconomic, holistic or attribute based etcetera (Brijs et al., 2011; Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Gartner, 1994; Han, 1989; Kock et al., 2016; Tasci, Gartner, & Tamer Cavusgil, 2007), and others have tried to identify and study the links and relationship between these elements (Buhmann & Ingenhoff, 2015; Zeugner-Roth & Žabkar, 2015), what seems to be an area of concern raised by many authors, especially in tourism, is the lack of a widely accepted model or framework for destination image (Brijs et al., 2011; Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Kock et al., 2016) rendering the task of attaching value to the place image, extremely difficult (Stock, 2009). In addition, Lu, Heslop, Thomas and Kwan (2016) observe in their systematic review that the research in country image area is slowing down. This does not necessarily suggest that the importance of this area has diminished, rather than the process of trying to encapsulate the subjective images of places that people hold in their minds in one framework, is fraught with difficulties.

In summary, it appears that, in essence both place identity and place image are cognitions, meanings, emotions, social definitions that people attach to a geographical space which would be called place because of these very cognitions (Proshansky et al., 1983; Tuan, 1979). Place identity and place image constantly interact with each other (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013) and they only differ depending on which side of the boundary between “we/us” and “they/them” (Massey, 1994; Tuan, 1979), the people find themselves in geographical, temporal, cognitive and emotional terms. The boundary is not fixed, it shifts every time the question “Who?” is asked (Taylor, 1989) depending whether people feel inside or outside of it (Relph, 1976). Figure 3 adapted from Tuan (1979, p. 420) tries to capture this relationship.

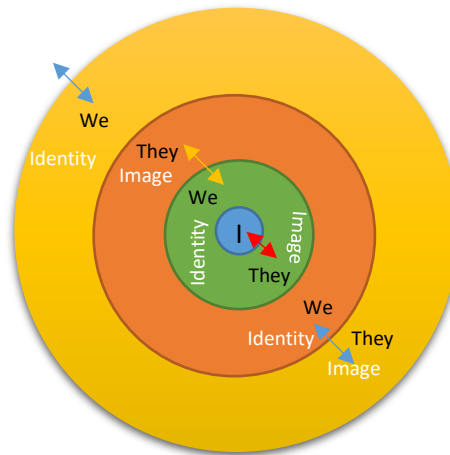


Figure 3 The shifting boundary between Place Identity and Place Image.

Adapted from Tuan (1979, p. 420)

What the review of the literature relating to this first theme suggests is that the notion of a distinctive “place” is derived from the way people based and living within its geographical/ physical environment interact and experience that environment and it appears that what gives the place its personality, distinctive character and identity are two factors:

- the interaction between geographical space and the people who are and feel inside this place, wherever they draw its spatial boundary (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013; Norberg-Schulz, 1980; Relph, 1976; Seamon & Sowers, 2008; Tuan, 1979)
- the dialectic exchange with the place image, which represents the interaction between geographical space and people within it, with the people who are and feel outside this place (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013; Relph, 1976)

The concepts identified through this theme served as a scaffold in exploring the perceptions of the research participants about the IoM in terms of its image and identity, which is the first objective of this research.

The research for defining concepts, identifying models and frameworks helped identify the influence that place identity and image have into changing the place and the factors they are influenced by. This topic has been subject of very heated debates between researchers in different disciplines and it has been identified as a very important theme which is explored in the next section.

2.3.2.2 Theme 2. Place identity, place image, place branding and marketing interconnected through impact

The impact that the identity and image have on the physical place, its internal and external audiences, and the impact that marketing and branding can have upon both the image and identity of the place, appears to be a reoccurring theme in the majority of the systematic reviews (17 out of 20) and the rest of the articles. This theme is important for this research because what makes the place identity, place image, place branding and marketing the core concepts of this research is exactly that: the impact. In order to identify the impact, place image and identity are represented as a mix of a number of dimensions and components, which sometimes are studied in isolation and sometimes holistically (d'Astous & Boujbel, 2007; Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Han, 1989; Tasci et al., 2007). The discussions under this theme were wide and included a number of subthemes, which reflect a chain of cause and effect relationships of various factors. Therefore, a synthesis of the discussions for each subtheme follows below.

Subtheme 2.1. The impact of the image and identity on places

With regards to the impact of the image and identity on the place, Haslam et al. (2008) suggest that the use by political forces of people's place identity, in the forms of calling to their patriotism or the call of the country, can have profound effects in changing places positively and negatively, as the history of world wars and dramatic shifts has already demonstrated.

Another area of research, which studies the impact of place image on the countries produce and vice versa, has been dedicated to the topic of the country of origin (COO) effect. Numerous authors have studies various dimensions of place identity and image which impact on the customers perception of a product and their intention to buy (Brijs et al., 2011; De Nisco, Papadopoulos, & Elliot, 2017; Fan, 2006; Han, 1989; Kleppe & Mossberg, 2005; Roth & Diamantopoulos, 2009; C. L. Wang, Li, Barnes, & Ahn, 2012), even though research from Pike (2013) and Nebenzahl, Jaffe and Lampert (1997) suggest that this also depends on the brands and the time the products are introduced to particular markets.

In the tourism area many researchers (Chen & Phou, 2013; De Nisco et al., 2017; Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Elliot & Papadopoulos, 2016; Gartner, 1994; Martín-Santana, Beerli-Palacio, & Nazzareno, 2017; Molinillo, Liébana-Cabanillas, Anaya-Sánchez, & Buhalis, 2018; Nadeau, Heslop, O'Reilly, & Luk, 2008; Tasci et al., 2007) agree that place image has a strong influence on the tourists selection of places and intention to travel.

In addition research (Clark, Lloyd, Wong, & Jain, 2002; Florida, 2002; Zenker, 2009) suggests that the place image impacts the choice of location for the talented workforce and businesses economic decisions (Mihailovich, 2006), which is the main aim of this research. While it is clear how the image and identity influence the choices it is paramount to identify the factors they are influenced by, which leads to the next subtheme.

Subtheme 2.2. The factors that influence the image and the identity of a place

Many authors over the years (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Gartner, 1994; Insch & Avraham, 2014; Kleppe & Mossberg, 2005; Kotler & Gertner, 2002; Lu et al., 2016; Roosvall, 2017; Stepchenkova & Li, 2014; C. L. Wang et al., 2012; Zenker & Beckmann, 2013) agree that frequently people's images of different places are based on stereotypes which, according to Boisen, Terlouw and van Gorp (2011), represent "collective or shared perceptions" (p.139) created through direct or mediated experience with the place. Residents tend to reinforce the positive stereotypes, and they are also promoted by the authorities (Boisen et al., 2011), but when stereotypes are unfavourable they can influence place reputation in a negative way and it is very hard to change (Boisen et al., 2011; Kotler & Gertner, 2002; O'Shaughnessy & O'Shaughnessy, 2000).

Other factors that impact the image and the identity of a place at various extents have created space for the research to branch out further, for example the peripherality or remoteness of the place (Canavan, 2013; Rijnks & Strijker, 2013), social and political systems (Boulding, 1959; Foroudi et al., 2016; Tasci & Holecek, 2007; C. L. Wang et al., 2012), people's attitudes (Parker, Roper, & Medway, 2015; Ryan & Aicken, 2010) and individual's (visitor or expatriate) background (de Eccher & Duarte, 2018). Amongst these factors, media (Garcia, 2017; Molinillo et al., 2018; O'Shaughnessy & O'Shaughnessy, 2000; D. Wang, Chan, & Pan, 2015) and branding and marketing (Beerli & Martín, 2004; Gartner, 1994; Niedomysl & Jonasson, 2012) are considered as very important in influencing the place image. Furthermore, Cleave and Arku (2017) consider place branding as a mediator between place values and customer's expectations. Therefore place marketing and branding will be explored further in the next paragraph.

Subtheme 2.3. The role of branding and marketing in relation to places

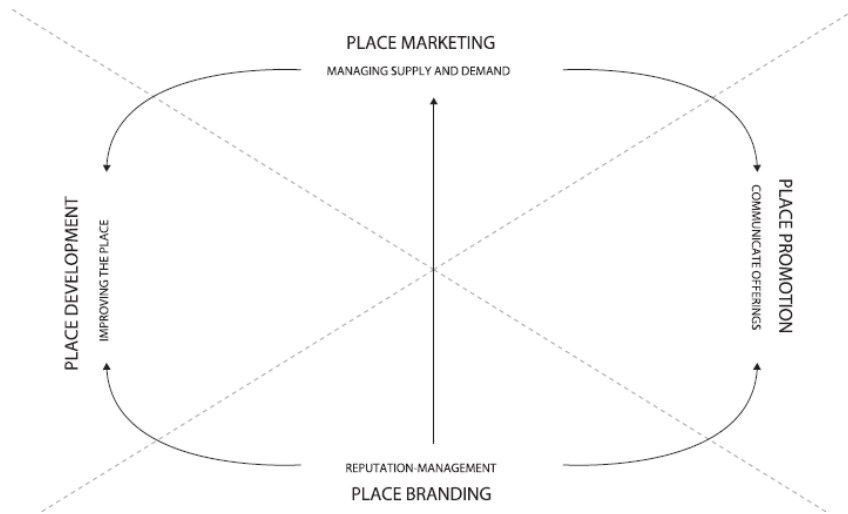
Considering that competition between places, countries, nations, regions and cities for resources, tourists, talent is now a widely accepted concept (Acharya & Rahman, 2016; Kotler & Gertner, 2002; Malecki, 2004; Porter, 2011), place marketing has emerged as a very important tool in the efforts "to improve the competitive image of the place"(Niedomysl & Jonasson, 2012, p. 225; Zenker & Martin, 2011) and an area of research. Marketing theories and concepts have been applied widely in tourism

area over the years to promote holiday destinations (Papadopoulos, 2004), however, the adoption of marketing tools and strategies to promote places has sparked debate. On one side there are the researchers who argue that the application of marketing strategies which are used to promote various corporate organisations can create a competitive advantage for the place (Anholt, 2006; Bell, 2016; Freire, 2005; Gertner, 2007; Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005; Kotler & Gertner, 2002; Mihailovich, 2006; Nedomysl & Jonasson, 2012; Skinner, 2011; Zenker & Martin, 2011). Some authors (Bell, 2016; Boisen, Terlouw, Groote, & Couwenberg, 2018; Freire, 2011) consider place branding as having an important influence on the place reputation and as a very important factor in shaping place identity (Van Ham, 2008). While many authors agree in the use of corporate marketing and branding for place promotion, they all highlight that place branding is more complex than product branding (Anholt, 2006; Lindstedt, 2011; Warnaby & Medway, 2013; Zenker & Beckmann, 2013) but due to its many components it is similar to corporate branding in many aspects (Dinnie, 2008; Olins, 2002).

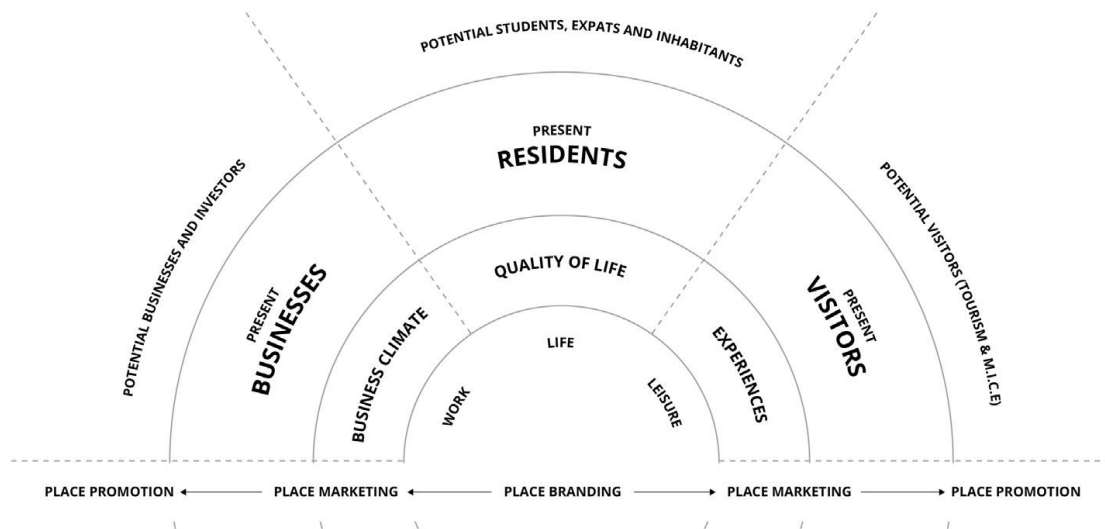
Some researchers express their scepticism on the use of branding for places, because what is being marketed is not a product with fixed features, which if not successful can be changed or abandoned, rather an entire place or nation with the complex social relations, politics, economics, culture and many more factors involved (Aronczyk, 2009; Dinardi, 2017; Eisenschitz, 2010; Fan, 2006; Hall, 1997; Jansen, 2008). Olins (2002) suggests that “branding the nation is not the same as branding a company – only that many techniques are similar” (p.247). This is echoed by Hankinson (2004) who argues that besides the complexities of considering the place as a product, the marketers have no control on it, they are mere coordinators of several stakeholder groups. On another note Van Ham (2002) warns that place branding is influencing international politics because it is making the state choose the brand identity which suits the audiences or serves particular political purposes. Following the criticism, Boisen et al. (2011) warn that place branding can heavily influence politics in place due to branding strategies favouring certain groups in society and discriminating others; their success would cause certain groups to become more attached and others to lose the connection with the place.

It is almost impossible to separate discussion of the notion of place marketing from that of place branding within the literature, even though Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) suggest that there is no defined difference between place marketing and place branding and Giovanardi, Lucarelli and Pasquinelli (2013) echo this idea by suggesting “to reconsider the dichotomy” (p.378). However, other authors (Berglund & Olsson, 2010; Gertner, 2011; Lucarelli & Berg, 2011; Lucarelli & Brorström, 2013; Skinner & Kubacki, 2007) express disagreement and insist that place marketing and place branding are different, not only semantically but conceptually too. Boisen, Terlouw, Groote, and Couwenberg

(2018) go further by elaborating in specific definitions, roles, goals and metrics for place promotion, place marketing and place branding.



*Figure 4 Place promotion, place marketing, place branding and place development
(Boisen et al., 2018)*



*Figure 5 Organisational aspects of place promotion, place marketing, and place branding
(Boisen et al., 2018).*

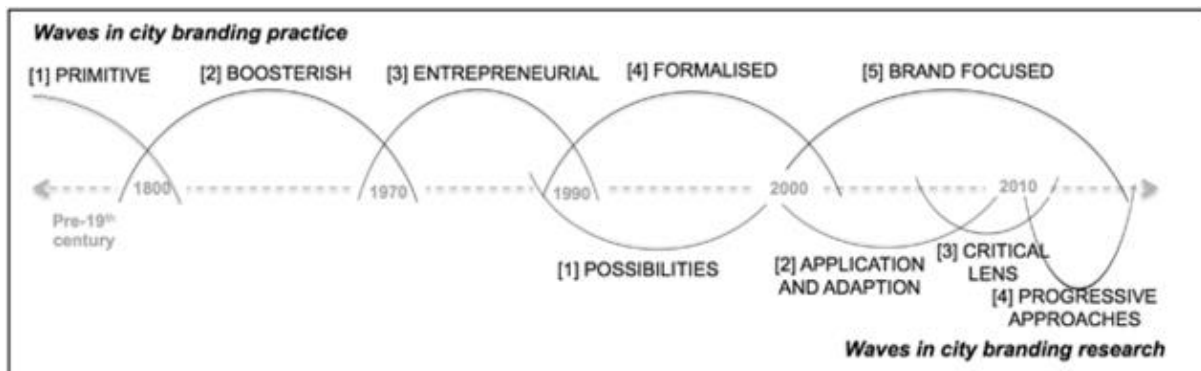
However, a widely accepted definition of these terms is yet to emerge (Merkelsen & Rasmussen, 2016). Many authors (Aronczyk, 2009; Dinnie, 2008; Lucarelli & Berg, 2011) have suggested various definitions for place branding, however concurring only on the fact that the aim of place branding is to prompt the audiences into making associations and create expectations about the place. While Ballantyne and Aitken (2007) warn about the dangers of multiple definitions for branding as a concept,

Hankinson (2010) and Papadopoulos (2004) point at the lack of cooperation between different academic disciplines which are ignoring the perspective of the practitioners.

Despite the aforementioned issues with definitions, place branding is the theme that has been present in the majority of the articles selected for this review. Place branding is a growing area of research, as highlighted in several systematic reviews (Acharya & Rahman, 2016; Gertner, 2011; Vuignier, 2017), which has resulted in a large number of articles and an academic journal dedicated to it (Journal of Place Branding and Diplomacy). While it might appear that there is no direct link between the historical development of the place branding and the issues this research is looking to address, perhaps this could help the understanding of the previous branding campaigns in the IoM. Therefore the next section explores the treatment of place branding within the literature.

Subtheme 2.4. Place branding as a new area of research

According to Hanna and Rowley (2008), the place branding as an area of research appears to have gained a great momentum only in this millennium, a conclusion supported by Green, Grace and Perkins (2016) in their systematic review in city branding (as illustrated in Figure 6).



*Figure 6 Waves in city branding research
(Green et al., 2016)*

Here it is important to highlight that in the literature frequently the notion of place, geographically represents anything from country, nation, location to city, region, area and neighbourhood (Hanna & Rowley, 2008), nevertheless, Lewicka's (2010) research suggest that the scale of the place has different impacts in people's level of attachment with the place and interestingly people are more attached to the place when this is their home or city, rather than estate, neighbourhood or district.

Green et al. (2016) observe that while the primitive stage refers to city branding fulfilling the government and elite ambitions, the boosterish stage is the time when cities start competing for resources and visitors. The authors highlight the entrepreneurial stage as the time when cities were being managed like businesses and the formalised stage refers to the use of sophisticated marketing and promotion. In the last 20 years they confirm that city branding has become almost standard practice, starting with the application of corporate branding theory to the city branding. Papadopoulos (2004) suggests that during this period, developed countries experienced the migration of FDIs toward the emerging markets, hence the necessity to engage in place branding to attract them back. This historical development suggests that the launch of the “Freedom to flourish” campaign in the IoM in 2003 corresponds to the beginning of the stage where the principles of corporate branding theory started being applied in place branding and as a result explains the lack of understanding and the resistance from several stakeholders in the IoM.

Green et al. (2016) also notice that during the first decade of this millennia the research starts adopting more critical theories, reaching at the last stage where progressive approaches recognise the complexity of city branding and look toward the co-creation and cooperation with all stakeholders in the process of branding a city. However, the stakeholders engagement in place branding process has never been straight forward and has emerged as a subtheme in this review which will be discussed in the next section.

Subtheme 2.5. Stakeholders role and importance in place branding

Aronczyk (2009) strongly disagrees with the arguments about the extent of the citizens involvement on the place branding process because, as Boisen et al. (2011) and Eisenschitz (2010) argue, place branding favours only particular stakeholders groups. Therefore, some authors (Aitken & Campelo, 2011; Kavaratzis, 2012; Konecnik Ruzzier & de Chernatony, 2013) insist on implementation of inclusive practices in the place branding process. Mackrell's (2013) research on the IoM “Freedom to flourish” branding campaign identified that branding failed to deliver some of the expected benefits due to (amongst others) the public not being considered as a stakeholder in the process. Similarly Hultman, Yeboah-Banin and Formaniuk (2016) notice that different stakeholders have different view points and for place branding to be successful it is imperative to find common ground. However, Jansen (2008) considers the efforts to find the common ground and deliver one single brand message as a way to shut down the differences and undermining of democracy.

The importance of residents and their role in place branding has been highlighted by many authors (Aitken & Campelo, 2011; E. Braun, Kavaratzis, & Zenker, 2013; Kavaratzis, 2012; Konecnik Ruzzier &

de Chernatony, 2013). Despite the differences in the place branding models included in this review, stakeholders were the central consideration in all of them (Botschen, Promberger, & Bernhart, 2017; Foroudi et al., 2016; Hanna & Rowley, 2011; Konecnik Ruzzier & de Chernatony, 2013; Song & Sung, 2013). Stakeholders were referred to as: the customers/consumers (Kavaratzis, 2012), community (Aitken & Campelo, 2011), local population (Lindstedt, 2011), a whole network of diverse stakeholders (Hankinson, 2004; Konecnik Ruzzier & de Chernatony, 2013), or “groups that collectively produce place brand” (p. 82), with brand managers being one of them (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013). This debate brings to attention another area of discussion on place branding, its management and how this can be shaped by various policies and decision. Therefore the next subtheme delves further into the links between place branding and policies.

Subtheme 2.6. Branding should be part of place development strategies

According to Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) the place branding process is led by brand managers, and many authors agree that place branding is an activity initiated by the various authorities in their attempt to attract businesses or tourists (Acharya & Rahman, 2016; Olins, 2002). For this reason many of the articles stress the importance of place brand management (Freire, 2005; Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013; Kotler & Gertner, 2002), even though places have brands without any branding activity (Giovanardi et al., 2013; Kotler & Gertner, 2002). In a simplistic delineation Van Ham (2008) goes as far as comparing the flag, anthem and constitution of a nation to brand, logo and mission statement.

Fan (2006) suggests that branding will not solve a country’s problems, yet a number of authors insist that place branding should be high on governments’ agendas (Cleave et al., 2016; Gertner, 2007; Houllier-Guibert, 2012; Jones & Kubacki, 2014; Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013; Konecnik Ruzzier & de Chernatony, 2013) and should not be confused with its operationality (de Noronha, Coca-Stefaniak, & Morrison, 2017). According to Zhao, Sun and Kakuda (2017), when place branding is institutionalised, it does not only increases the trust between companies in the country but also increases their involvement in the process. Also Jones and Kubacki (2014) systematic review stresses that government support is crucial in the place branding success, especially in places with social problems. However, they also insist that investing in branding and ignoring social problems will not work, which converges with Anholt’s (2006) warning that “What advertising and marketing cannot ever do, is to make a bad city look good: that is propaganda, not brand management, and it is as wasteful as it is ineffectual” (p.31). Rose (2010) shares a similar view when arguing that branding is not an exercise to fill the gap between image and identity of a place, rather it is quality assurance (Egan, 2008), a promise (De Chernatony, 2008) which if not kept can do more damage than good (Papadopoulos, 2004).

Overall the discussion under the theme of impacts of place identity, image, marketing and branding has highlighted important issues which cannot be ignored. Place identity is a strong motivator in engaging populations to change places for good or bad. Place image impacts people's perceptions on place's products, choice of holidays and choice of places where to live. Place branding and marketing are different strategies and tools which can help to enhance place image, but at the same time great consideration should be taken with regards to their influence on place's identity and the impact they can have on different stakeholders. The stakeholders can influence place branding and marketing process as much as they can be influenced by it, as a result place branding should be considered as a high road policy. At this point "the need for quantifying the influence of place branding is prescient" (Cleave & Arku, 2017, p. 427). The topic of measuring and quantifying the impact of place branding and place image will be delved into further in the next theme.

2.3.2.3 Theme 3. The complexity of place branding makes it difficult to measure the impact

This third core theme embraces those systematic reviews and articles where the emphasis appears to be placed on the importance of considering how the impact of place branding could be measured.

As place branding is an activity undertaken by place authorities (local or central), it is mostly funded by public money and top ups by private sponsors (Hankinson, 2010; Jansen, 2008). However, committing of funds in practices which success has not yet been quantified suggests a state of desperation (Cleave & Arku, 2017). "When a place invests heavily in place marketing measures, it is likely to be a crisis measure" (Niedomysl & Jonasson, 2012, p. 228), but this does not necessarily imply loss of accountability for spending of public money. As a result, to evaluate the effectiveness of the money spent requires a measure of the benefit (Hereźniak, Florek, & Augustyn, 2018a; Jacobsen, 2012) or equity (Donner, Fort, & Vellema, 2014; Zenker, 2014; Zenker & Martin, 2011) generated by a complex activity like place branding; this could be different for private sponsors and the public sector (Hankinson, 2010). As the complexity of the place branding appears to stem from its components, the first step would be to identify these components, the relationship between them and measure the extent to which they can be influenced and impact upon places. This will be looked into in more detail in the subtheme below.

Subtheme 3.1. The importance of identifying the brand components and the relationship between them

Much of the emphasis with the extant literature has focused on the task of untangling the complexity of place branding, with a lot of research having gone into identifying place brand components,

indicators, antecedents, critical factors, elements, attributes (Foroudi et al., 2016; Hanna & Rowley, 2011, 2013; Hereźniak et al., 2018a; Jacobsen, 2012; Kavaratzis & Kalandides, 2015; Lindstedt, 2011; Mihailovich, 2006; Song & Sung, 2013; Zenker, 2011) or creation of approaches like “brand ecology” (Giovanardi et al., 2013), micro-social approach (Houllier-Guibert, 2012) or “nation brand molecule” (Rojas-Méndez, 2013). Place branding complexity has also given rise to the concern that it is sometimes confused with visual identity and reduced to logos and slogans which are only a part of it (Ashworth & Kavaratzis, 2009; Govers, 2013; Houllier-Guibert, 2012; Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013; Mihailovich, 2006). Yet, there are still no widely accepted models or definitions of place branding (Merkelsen & Rasmussen, 2016; Vuignier, 2017).

Place brand image and identity appear as two major components in place branding literature. The relationship between identity and brand image has been widely discussed by many authors (Anholt, 2006; Florek, Insch, & Gnoth, 2006; Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013; Pomering, 2013; Zavattaro, 2013). By avoiding the simplistic approaches (Giovanardi et al., 2013, p. 378), some authors (Anholt, 2006; Gertner, 2007; Sevin, 2011) suggest that place brands should be comprehensive and reflect the place. However, other authors (Jones & Kubacki, 2014; Ooi, 2008; Zavattaro, 2013) differ in their opinion by arguing that brand is a vision, what a place wishes to become, so there is no need to show off all the problems the place has. Yet, comprehensive or not, for many authors (Alaux et al., 2015; Gould & Skinner, 2007; Pigman, 2012; Pomering, 2013; Skinner & Kubacki, 2007) the connection between place brand identity and place identity is of great importance.

Another important discussion which explores how brand image and brand identity influence place identity and various stakeholders has been raised as cause for concern by many authors (Aronczyk, 2009; Boisen et al., 2011; Fan, 2006; Mayes, 2008; Sevin, 2011). Ballantyne and Aitken (2007) argue that brand image is “a shared reality, dynamically constructed through social interaction” (p.365) which is shaped through continual iterations (Aitken & Campelo, 2011), and is congruent with Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) suggestion that place branding is effective when the culture of the place changes as shown in *Figure 7*.

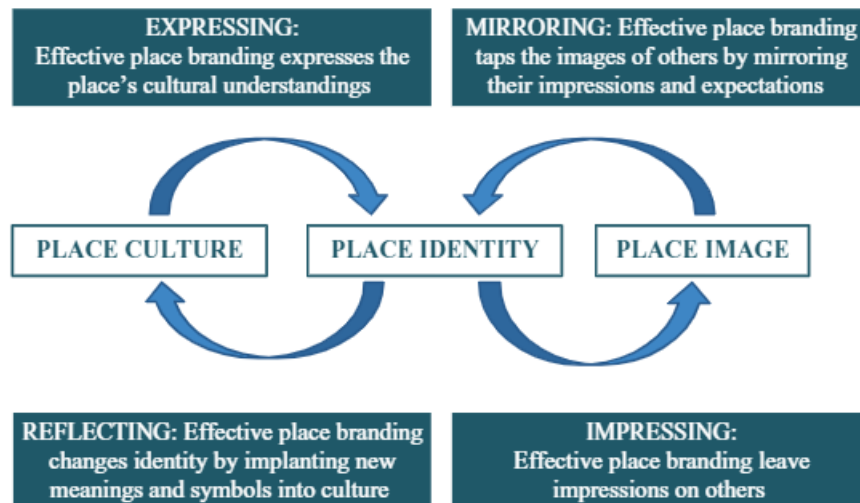


Figure 7 How place branding shadows the identity process

(Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013)

Similarly, according to Botschen et al. (2017), place branding, based on the place identity, aims to promote the place by creating a place brand image. However, the place brand image created for the audiences does not necessarily fully reflect the place culture. As a result they conclude that the place culture changes, aiming to match the impressions of the markets, which are exposed to the place promotion, and the process is reiterated. This process is met with strong opposition by Aronczyk (2009), who disagrees with the concept of creating a “new and improved national identity” (p.292) or making national identity “useful” (p.292). This is echoed by Jansen (2008) who sees the national identity becoming a marketing narrative. Jansen (2008) highlights that the place branding process costs governments a great amount of public money, which are frequently not disclosed. Yet, when the outcomes are not delivered, according to Aronczyk (2009) the place branding process is used to shift the blame on to the citizens. As a result it is paramount to develop measures which take into account the complexity of the components, the monetary inputs and the complex outcomes. This discussion is explored further in the next subtheme.

Subtheme 3.2. Place brand equity/value – the outcome of place branding process

When it comes to quantifying or “putting a number on the place”(Cleave & Arku, 2017, p. 425), a number of authors have tried to identify or adopt various frameworks which could allow the measuring of the impact of place branding and marketing. Drawing from Aaker’s definition of brand equity (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000), Papadopoulos (2004) defines place branding equity as “the real and/or perceived assets and liabilities that are associated with a place (country) and distinguish it from others” (p.43) for which Govers (2013) asserts that “equity...is in people’s minds” (p.74).

A lot of work in quantifying place brand equity has been based on Keller's (1993) customer-based brand equity (CBBE). Konecnik and Gartner (2007) researched the application of this concept in the tourism context (the Destination Brand Equity DBE) concluding that while the image is a vital component of brand dimensions, the other components such as awareness, quality and loyalty should not be neglected. Bose, Roy and Tiwari (2016) developed a measuring instrument for application of CBBE in place branding with the focus on investment attraction (Customer-based Place Brand Equity CBPBE). Jacobsen's (2012) research also based on CBBE, suggests that by adjusting certain attributes and benefits the investor-based place brand equity model could be used to measure the brand equity for particular target groups, however, this model is not recommended for umbrella place brands.

Some of the tools that are used for measuring brand value include: the Anholt-GMI Brand index which ranks "how the world sees the world's cities" (p.19) or nations; the index has a nation version and a city version (Anholt, 2006). Both indices are measured through surveys of external audiences along six dimensions; for cities they are: presence, potential, people, prerequisites, pulse and place, and for nations are: tourism, exports, governance, investments and immigration, culture and heritage, people. Zenker (2011) suggests the Place Brand Perception model which also focuses on audiences perceptions. However, Hereźniak et al. (2018) suggest that the majority of indices and rankings reflect the outcomes of the place branding only for the outside audiences rather than trying to encapsulate the perspectives of all the stakeholders. This is supported by Rojas-Méndez (2013) who to overcome the outward view of the Anholt GMI Indices suggest the "nation branding molecule" (NBM) model which shares some of its dimensions with the GMI indices and the FutureBrand index. Similarly Botschen et al. (2017) Brand-driven Identity Development of Places (BIDP) model focuses on translating the intended place brand identity into positive touchpoint experiences for all the stakeholders. Caldwell and Freire (2004) propose de Chernatony's Brand Box Model, which analysis the brands from two dimensions: representationality and functionality. Cleave and Arku (2017) systematic review concludes that the place brand has a great influence in the decision making process being that for investing, travel or relocation, and can be measured through three dimensions: adaptiveness, effectiveness and efficiency. Donner et al. (2014) suggest a multidimensional approach in establishing the place brand equity, which is supported by Hereźniak et al. (2018). For Zenker and Martin (2011) place brand equity can be used to measure/evaluate place image which will be discussed further in the next section.

Subtheme 3.3. Place brand image – part of place brand equity

Over the years many researchers have tried to identify a tool or framework which could help measure the image of the place in various contexts such as tourism, investment attraction and many more.

While some authors (S. Pike, 2002; Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010) highlight the difficulties in identifying frameworks that could be used in various contexts, research from Echtner and Ritchie (1991) suggested the multi attribute model for measuring the destination image. Gallarza, Saura and García's (2002) systematic review proposes a conceptual model which highlights the nature of tourism destination image (TDI) along four dimensions and identifies the taxonomies that can be used to measure the image. While Elliot and Papadopoulos (2016) suggest that TDI should not be measured separately from the product country image (PCI), rather all areas should come together into creating a model for measuring the place image which should encapsulate all types of image and centralise the branding efforts. In another study, Papadopoulos and Heslop (2002) even though they do not propose a model as such, they insist in creation of an "umbrella brand" or "unitary image" (p.312) for places. Zenker (2014) in his research aims to demonstrate that the use of Advanced Brand Concept Map (aBCM) (Schnittka, Sattler, & Zenker, 2012) can assist in evaluating the place brand image changes, which they view as part of brand equity.

This core theme has highlighted the importance and the difficulty of measuring the impact of place branding and the various discussions about the methods and tools that have been explored to date. One of the main issues raised is the fact that there is not yet a comprehensive model which identifies the place brand components and how they relate to each other. As a consequence deciding what and how to measure becomes an issue. While some authors have suggested indices and rankings which measure the impact of the place branding on the perception of the audiences, others insist that it is important to develop measures that account for the impact of place branding on all the stakeholders.

2.4 Insights from the Literature review analysis

This literature review has provided some important insights with regards to the developments in the studies of place image, identity and branding, despite the fact that there is a lack of unity in terms of definitions and established theoretical concepts and models (Gertner, 2011; Hildreth, 2010; Stock, 2009; Vuignier, 2017). While this lack of unity could be due to the multidisciplinary nature of the place branding field of studies (Lucarelli & Brorström, 2013), this very nature is the fundamental key to understanding the full complexity of a process like place branding. The insights from research in geography, that define place as the node where space and meaning come together, a dynamic and fluid concept (Cresswell & Hoskins, 2008; Massey, 1994; Tuan, 1979), underpin conclusions from the psychology and sociology sciences that place identity is a constantly evolving process (Agnew, 2011; Hernández et al., 2007; Kalandides, 2012; Proshansky et al., 1983) and place image is "a mental construct" (Reynolds, 1965, p. 69) composed of imagery, beliefs and claims which change constantly (O'Shaughnessy & O'Shaughnessy, 2000).

The contribution from all different disciplines can help defining the fundamental concepts of place, place image and place identity, which are very important for this research as it creates a frame for exploring the perception of people about the IoM depending whether they reside in or out this place. By recognising the host of factors that influence places, their identities and their images and the impact that these later ones have upon each other, can help focus marketing and branding efforts to promote the places and contribute to their economic growth and social progress. This requires place branding to be treated as “high road policy” (Cleave et al., 2016; Gertner, 2007; Jones & Kubacki, 2014) because place branding is not a matter of logos and slogans (Anholt, 2008b; Govers, 2013), rather deep transformative process which should take into consideration the interests of all stakeholders (Konecnik Ruzzier & de Chernatony, 2013). At the same time it is paramount to measure the benefits and consequences on all stakeholders of any initiative that is undertaken with this regard.

How the insights derived from this literature review will guide the process of evaluating how the adoption of place branding and marketing strategies can help to make the IoM an attractive place for businesses and workforce, will be discussed in the next section.

2.4.1 Implications from the literature review for this research

The aim of this literature review was to establish the theoretical underpinnings of the main concepts such as place identity, place image, place branding and marketing, which the research would aim to explore in the context of the IoM, and further on to evaluate whether the theory could provide any frameworks or models that could inform the creation and practical application of place branding strategies, in order to be able to achieve the objectives of this research. Therefore a summary of how the insights from the literature review have informed and contributed in the achievement of the research objectives follows below:

Objective 1. To analyse and compare the way in which the Isle of Man (IoM)’s identity and image are currently perceived and understood amongst business owners and talented people who currently live in the IoM

The review of the literature provides numerous definitions and conceptualisations of the concepts of place, place identity and place image, however, the most important takeaway that could assist the achievement of this first objective is that, the notion of a distinctive “place” is derived from the way people based and living within its geographical/ physical environment interact and experience that environment and it appears that what gives the place its personality, distinctive character and identity are two factors:

- a. the interaction between geographical space and the people who are and feel inside this place, wherever they draw its spatial boundary (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013; Norberg-Schulz, 1980; Relph, 1976; Seamon & Sowers, 2008; Tuan, 1979)
- b. the dialectic exchange with the place image which represents the interaction between geographical space and people within it, with the people who are and feel outside this place (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013; Relph, 1976)

Therefore it was paramount to consider the concepts of place identity and image when exploring the perceptions of the research participants about the IoM, this being before they came to the IoM and while they were living on the IoM.

Objective 2. To analyse how the IoM is portrayed through the IoM government web -based communications aimed at businesses and talented people looking to relocate

The whole place branding strategy aims to create and manage a positive image and reputation for the place (Boisen et al., 2018), therefore it is of significant importance to manage how places are portrayed through various media. The literature suggests that how places are portrayed through government controlled platforms such as websites, represents the place brand identity (Florek et al., 2006; Govers & Go, 2008), which is a very important factor in the creation of place brand image and the overall place image (Gartner, 1994) and one of the very few variables that can be controlled to a certain extent. Consequently how the IoM is portrayed through the government websites represented a very important variable for this research.

Objective 3. To compare and contrast the way which the IoM is portrayed through government web based communications with the perceptions of the IoM held by the business people in the IoM

The literature suggests that, comparing and contrasting how a place is portrayed through media with how it is perceived by its residents, assists in identifying whether there is alignment between place brand identity and place identity, therefore comparing and contrasting how the IoM is portrayed through government's websites with how the residents perceive the IoM, will aid in identifying whether there is alignment between the IoM's brand identity and the IoM's identity. There is an overall agreement in academia with regards to the importance of the link between place identity and place brand identity, however, there is still a debate between researchers whether the place brand identity should be comprehensive in reflecting the place identity (Anholt, 2008a; Gertner, 2011; Sevin, 2011) or aspirational (Jones & Kubacki, 2014; Ooi, 2008; Zavattaro, 2013). Identifying whether there

is alignment between the place brand identity and place identity of the IoM and how this could be perceived by the research participants, were matters explored through the research data analysis.

Objective 4. To evaluate how the adoption of place branding and marketing strategies might help to manage the alignment between communicated image of the IoM and business people perceptions and address the challenge of attracting new businesses and talented workforce in the IoM

To evaluate how the adoption of the place branding and marketing strategies would assist in addressing the challenge to attract businesses and workforce, would require consideration of theoretical models and frameworks. The literature suggests that despite numerous models and frameworks the researchers are yet to reach an agreement on what would work best under which circumstances. Therefore the consideration of theoretical models and frameworks necessary for the achievement of this objective was guided by the insights generated from the research data, and the recommendations were generated based on the best fit scenario.

A simplistic depiction of the links between place branding, place image and place identity and the area of focus for this research is shown in the Figure 8 below. The vertical line in the middle of the figure represents the boundary that separates people who live inside the place (US – identity) and people who live outside (THEM - image).

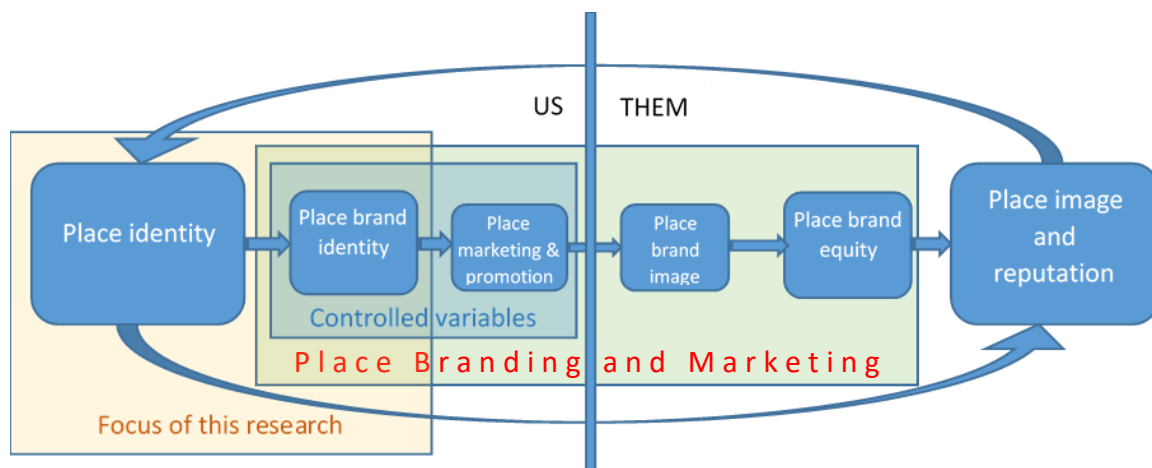


Figure 8 Links between Place Identity, Image and Branding

Overall, the literature review provided the main principles and definitions that helped in gaining an understanding of the main issues that this research is aiming to address while the next chapter, the methodology, discusses the scaffold and the justification for how this research was conducted starting from the philosophical assumptions, than moving on to the methods of data collections and data

analysis, further justifying how the principles of the research quality and ethics were followed, and in the end closes by highlighting the limitations of this whole methodology.

3 Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

As was highlighted in the introductory chapter of this thesis, the IoM government is seeking to diversify away from the Island's traditional positioning as a tax haven dependent on banking and financial services and tourism (around the TT races in particular). Instead the IoM government are focusing on retaining and attracting skilled personnel and entrepreneurs.

The aim of the research will be achieved through the exploration of perceptions of the business people and other interested parties, and the way the IoM is portrayed by the IoM government in their web-based communications. Capturing people's views and perceptions in a specific context and contrasting this with other sources such as web-based media communications, are features of qualitative research (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014; Yin, 2016). Methodological choices and underpinning principles are shown in the Figure 9, the outline of the methodology.

3.2 Outline of the methodology

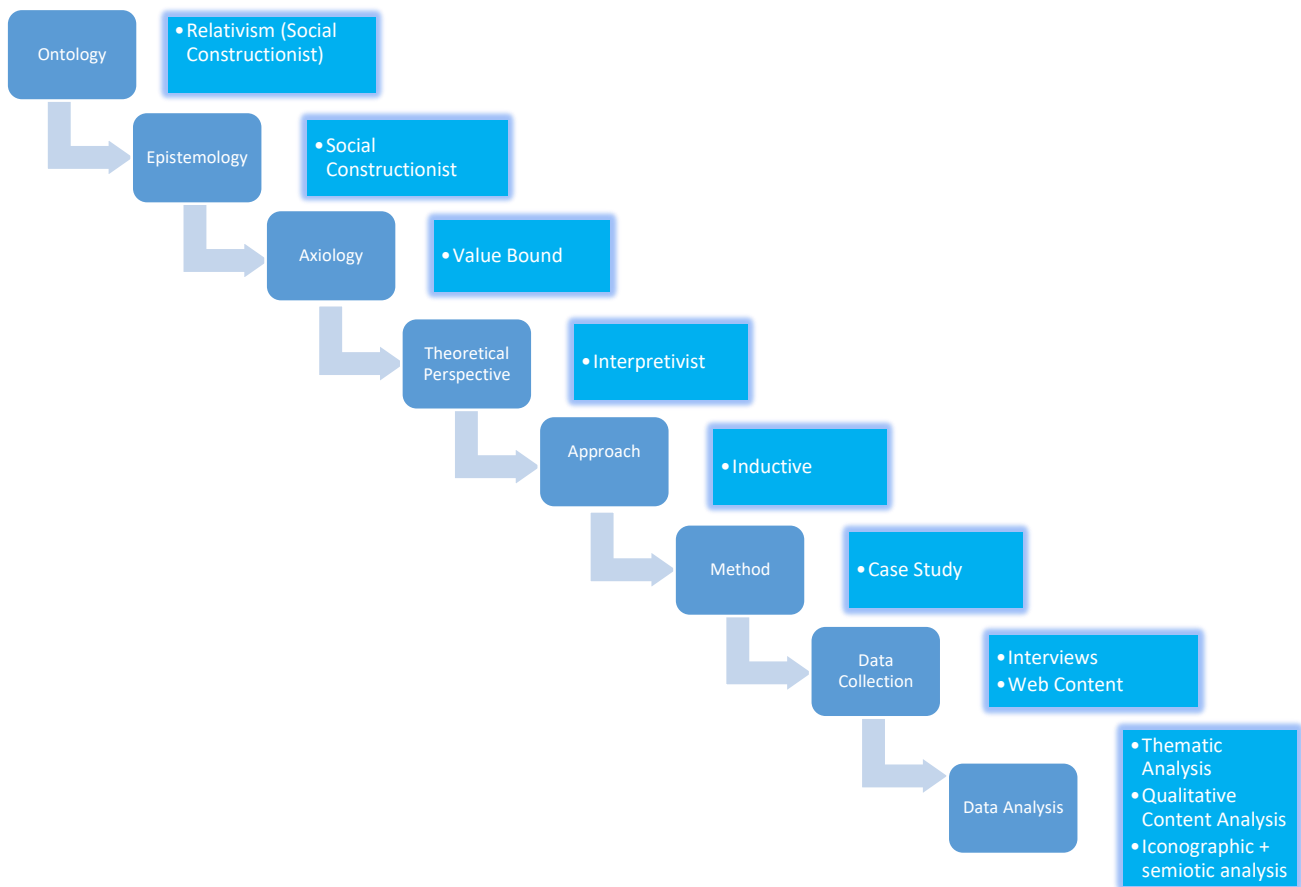


Figure 9 Outline of the methodology

3.3 Research philosophy

This study seeks to explore the differing perceptions and deep held beliefs about the IoM amongst key stakeholder groups, in particular amongst talented employees and entrepreneurs of small and medium sized businesses. How these perceptions impact the social reality of the place, highlights the social constructionist view that people and their social realities interact and impact each other (Cunliffe, 2008). It is important to note that the place itself is a space to which people attach meaning (Lewicka, 2008; Tuan, 1979), a fluid concept (Cresswell & Hoskins, 2008; Massey, 1994; Warnaby & Medway, 2013), “an ensemble of traits” (Tuan, 1979, p. 409), where materiality, social relations, power, institutions and representations are all interwoven (Kalandides, 2011). So in other words the objectivity of space, materiality and institutions are interwoven with the subjectivity of meanings, social relations, power and representations which reflects a social constructionist view where subjectivism and objectivism are entwined (Crotty, 1998; Dreher, 2016; Hynek & Teti, 2010), and shape one another (Nightingale & Cromby, 2002), despite the fact that Bryman and Bell (2011) argue

that constructionism is “antithetical to objectivism” (p.22), while Crotty (1998) suggests that it is equally antithetical to subjectivism too.

3.3.1 Ontology

The elaboration on place and identity as social constructs (Creed, Scully, & Austin, 2002) infers a social constructionist ontological position on place identity, which Kalandides (2011) considers to be a process in constant change rather than a fixed feature. However, this does not make place identity a less objective reality, rather “an objective facticity”(p.30) which follows Berger and Luckmann's (1966) social construction of reality through internalisation, objectification and externalisation. This is supported by Proshansky et al. (1983) definition of place identity as “valenced cognitions of physical setting” (p.74), in other words it is the cognitions that bear the significance of the physical settings. Furthermore it is this significance attached to the physical settings which makes it a place (Tuan, 1979), and supports Geertz (1973) view that “man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun” (p.5).

The same logic could be implied for place image because as O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy (2000) suggest, an image is a combination of many elements such as the imagery, the beliefs, the claims, which constantly change and can only be “interpreted by the mind's eye, not by the human eye”(p. 57). This does not imply that place image is pure imagination, a creation of mind, rather a constant interplay between meanings and associations with an objective space (Crotty, 1998; O'Shaughnessy & O'Shaughnessy, 2000).

3.3.2 Epistemology

Place, place identity and place image can be seen from a social constructionist ontological position, however, how people make sense of these socially constructed realities and how they create meanings and knowledge about them, reflects a social constructionist epistemological position (Nightingale & Cromby, 2002) which is congruent with the idea that knowledge is socially constructed (Berger & Luckmann, 1991; Nightingale & Cromby, 2002). Also the facts that, all three concepts (place, place identity and place image) represent processes that continually evolve (Cresswell & Hoskins, 2008; Kalandides, 2011; Kavaratzis & Kalandides, 2015), and the whole area of study of the place image, place identity lacks agreement in in terms of universally accepted definitions and frameworks (Gertner, 2011; Vuignier, 2017), are markers of the indeterminacy of knowledge in the area, which is the main feature of constructionist epistemology (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

While exploration and analysis of the place identity and place image are the first three objectives of this study, the fourth objective is to evaluate whether place marketing and branding strategies might be deployed to help manage the gap between the two. In that respect it is important to note that both brand identity and brand image, as part of branding strategy, are socially constructed concepts (Ballantyne & Aitken, 2007). Away from an objectivist position, which aims to identify mechanisms or structures behind the place brand creation and management, this study will rather explore how people make sense of place branding and how they perceive, influence and relate to the phenomenon and other people (Aitken & Campelo, 2011; Lucarelli & Brorström, 2013). Furthermore Palmer and Ponsonby (2002) and Hackley (2003) conclude that talking about marketing is talking about a socially constructed paradigm, where objective reality cannot be separated from the personal perspective.

One of the main conclusions of the literature review suggests that lack of agreement in various definitions and concepts in the place branding and marketing comes as result of studying topics of a multi-disciplinary area from a mono-disciplinary point of view (Lucarelli & Brorström, 2013). Wittgenstein (1922) suggests that it is paramount that the mono-disciplinary perspectives find common grounds through which all parties understand each other's meanings, or they construct new meanings (Crotty, 1998; Taylor, 1989) which cross the disciplinary boundaries. Never the less the numerous definitions of place identity, place image and place branding and the lack of the agreed frameworks perhaps should not be regarded as a theoretical weakness of the field, rather what according to Kuhn (1962) and Gergen and Thatchenkery (1996) can be considered a preparadigmatic stage of the field's development. This means that on one hand the lack of a paradigm will make it harder to build the research from so many different conclusions and disciplines of previous research, but on the other hand allows the freedom to experiment and find the best fit for the circumstances under study (Kuhn, 1970).

3.3.3 Theoretical perspective

From the theoretical perspective, the social constructionism philosophy (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) suggests an interpretivist approach (Noblit & Hare, 1988) which aims to explore subjective meanings and perceptions, rather than apply natural science and quantitative methods in social reality (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Crotty, 1998). Place identity and place image are phenomena built upon the culture and together with marketing and branding, which are culturally led processes, can be understood through interpretivism (Crotty, 1998; Geertz, 1973).

3.4 Research design

In adopting a social constructionist epistemology, the logical inference was the selection of the knowledge creation process, comprising essentially data collection methodologies and analysis which supported the purpose of this research (Cunliffe, 2011).

The study followed an inductive approach, where the insights from contrasting business people's perceptions of the IoM, with the image generated by the IoM government in its websites, helped guide the evaluation of strategic options for enhancing the attractiveness of the IoM.

One of the research designs that accommodates different epistemological orientations, including social constructionism, is the case study design (Yin, 2018). Case study design or methodology can be used to explore a case or multiple cases (J. W. Cresswell, 1998), however, this case (or cases) have to be distinctive. Various authors have identified the features which can establish the distinctiveness of the case as below:

- The case can be a bounded system or situation (Bryman & Bell, 2011; J. W. Cresswell, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Stake, 2000)
- The focus of the case is the phenomenon that happens within the boundaries of the case, being those time or place boundaries (J. W. Cresswell, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Ridder, 2017; Stake, 2000), however, the features of the case could be within or outside the boundaries (Stake, 2005).
- "The events or phenomena are studied within a real life context which they cannot be separated from" (Yin, 2009, p. 18)
- The use of triangulation process, which Stake (2005) defines as "a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation" (p.454) and (Yin, 2009) views it as "rationale for using multiple sources of evidence" (p.114).

The unique geographically bound circumstances of this research with its focus on the IoM's image and identity, arguably are well suited to a case study approach (Stake, 2005; Yin, 2018) which will focus around place identity, image and place brand. Branding and marketing are the phenomena under study which could not be separated by the context, the IoM, because it was this link between the phenomena and the context which makes this case unique and what this research was trying to achieve, was an in-depth exploration of this particular case (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Stake, 2005). The close link with the context, in turn made this research an intrinsic case study, unlike the instrumental case studies where a case like the IoM would be used to illustrate marketing and branding issues

generally (J. W. Cresswell, 1998; Stake, 1995). In an intrinsic case study design, congruent with the aims of this research, the core variables are peoples' beliefs and perceptions (Ridder, 2017; Woodside & Wilson, 2003).

Intrinsic case studies do not produce theory (Stake, 2005) rather they contribute to the wider knowledge by providing an account of the phenomenon which in the case of this research could contribute in further understanding of the place branding/marketing complexity and together with other case studies in the field would contribute to theory building (Ridder, 2017). The insights from this case study might be relevant only on the particular cultural context of the IoM, as every other empirical study on the place image, identity or branding is heavily determined by its unique cultural context, which concurs with Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson's (2008) assertion that social research cannot be "generalised across cultures" (p.104).

Yin (2018) argues that the use of case study as an empirical method can be advantageous in circumstances when "'how' or 'why' questions are being asked about a contemporary set of events, over which the researcher has no control" (p.13), thus converging with the aims of this research to explore how a place, in our case the IoM, appeared in the perceptions of different people, regardless of the media where it was displayed (people's minds or online media) and how these perceptions were impacting the reality and vice versa.

This research structure follows Cresswell's (1998) suggestion on constructing the story of a case study by describing the case, analysing the data through "levels of abstraction" and finally interpret the findings relating to "larger theoretical frameworks" (p.222).

One of the main features of the case study method, the possibility of achieving the data triangulation process (Stake, 2005; Yin, 2009) was enabled from the data collection method, explored in details in the next section.

3.5 Data Collection

The case study method requires different sources of data (Yin, 2009). For this reason the data were derived from two main different sources: a primary data collection using in-depth interviews, supplemented/triangulated by the content (text and image) of the Department for Enterprise (DfE) in the IoM Government websites.

One of the methods used for data collection, which allows a direct insight into participant's view, was un-structured, in depth interviews, where the participants were able to express their views and

opinions freely with the researcher asking mostly only the open question and further probing or prompting respondents for clarifications (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

The other method, which could explore one of the sources contributing to the IoM image, was analysis of text and images on the websites of the IoM government. While the text reveals the opinion of the authors (in this case the IoM government), so does the image, however, the image has the power to convince by providing “a miniaturisation of the real, without revealing either its constructed nature or its ideological content” (Urry, 1990, p. 139). Importantly various authors (Garcia, 2017; Molinillo et al., 2018; O’Shaughnessy & O’Shaughnessy, 2000; D. Wang et al., 2015) suggest that the websites are only one of the sources of influence on shaping people’s opinions about places, as “there is no single source of message origination or single destination in the Web” (Ha, James, Lomicky, & Salestrom, 1998, p. 459). Here it is important to note that the outcomes of the website analysis relate only to the researchers interpretation and not how the audience received or interpreted the website content.

3.5.1 Sampling

In order to collect the appropriate data, to draw out business and other organisations people’s perceptions on the IoM, a sampling plan was constructed as below:

Purposive, non-probabilistic sampling technique (Miles & Huberman, 1994), and as part of it the snowball sampling technique (Bryman & Bell, 2011), were used to identify individuals whose perceptions could give an insight (Yin, 2016) on how the IoM was viewed by business people who already lived there. The overall sampling was purposive because this research is focused in finding ways to attract only certain category of people, entrepreneurs and talented people mostly in the technology sector. This specific focus on sample targeting was adopted to reflect the aim of the government to attract people of similar mind-set and business attitude; however, this did not imply that the research would restrict the opinions, rather the opposite. Following Yin’s (2016) suggestion the aim was to encourage opinions as diverse as possible.

As a result, the main criteria for selecting the research participants were set to include: entrepreneurs, business leaders, talented people who already live in the IoM (local and relocated) and government officials working as part of the relocation initiative. Initially a small group of participants, matching the aforementioned characteristics, was identified from some of the networks in the IoM (IoM Business Network, CodeClub and British Computer Society IoM branch). As part of snowball sampling technique, these participants kindly contributed to identify and facilitate access to other participants (Bryman & Bell, 2011) who fitted the sample characteristics.

Further, stratification of the sample involved classifying the participants into groups (strata) based on the time they have lived in the IoM and their roles. In quantitative research the stratified sampling technique requires that each stratum is representative of the population being studied in order to fulfil the generalisability criteria of the study (Bryman & Bell, 2011). However, this is a qualitative research which aims to capture the perceptions of people within a certain category (for example within sample characteristics). These people might bring different perspectives (Bryman & Bell, 2011) in the way they viewed the IoM based on the specific stratum's characteristics (for example the job role or the length of stay), rather than being an exact representation of the population. As a result, no stratum size was established, rather the aim was to ensure the presence of participants with a possible mix of gender, country of origin, type of business for each group. One group was government officials who work on promoting the image of the IoM and local residents. The second group was entrepreneurs and business people that have been living in the IoM for more than 10 years. This group was selected with the aim to try and identify influences in the decision to settle maybe permanently in the IoM. The third group was people in the same category in terms of employment as the second group but who have relocated to the IoM in the last 10 years. This group was selected specifically to explore the motivations and influences in their decision to relocate.

The 10 year period was an arbitrary choice and any length of time which could reveal a certain level of rootedness (Tuan, 1980), some sort of contentment to living in this place rather than still doubting whether settling permanently or thinking for relocation somewhere else, would be as good. Whether this length of residence (10years) can demonstrate a merging of people with the environment where they live (Tuan, 1980), it was to be discovered through the interviews. In the Manx culture there are various terms still being used (even though not frequently in the recent years) which distinguish people based on the time they have lived in the IoM: the 'come overs', the 'stopovers' and 'Manx as the hills'. The 'come overs' are people who have relocated recently (no precise time indication), the 'stopovers' are people who relocated and decided to settle permanently and people who have lived in the IoM for generations are 'Manx as the hills'. This terminology does not appear very strong lately mostly because of the fact that the population of the IoM has nearly doubled in the past 60 years (Isle of Man Government, 2017a), however, whether people stay or leave the Island appears to be a factor that have not escaped the observation of the Manx people over the years and has left a trace in the Manx culture.

Various methodological studies have suggested different numbers of interviews in order to reach a comprehensive data saturation. Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) suggest that the saturation of the information and themes is reached at 12 interviews, while (Francis et al., 2010) study suggests that

data saturation is reached at 17 interviews. In another study Hennink, Kaiser and Marconi (2017) suggest that the code saturation was reached at nine interviews, however, the meaning saturation required 16-24 interviews. While the lower end of the number of the interviews is nine, the inconsistency of the upper level in the three articles, suggest that only a minimum number of interviews could be established. Therefore it was decided to start initially with nine interviews, which took place between 1st February 2019 and 4th April 2019. Using meaning saturation as guidance for the sample size, the initial analysis of the first nine interviews suggested the need for further interviews. The interviewing process with parallel analysis continued until February 2020, when the last interview took place. By this time it became clear that the patterns of ideas in the new interviews were a repetition of what had already been raised in the previous interviews, suggesting meaning saturation, therefore the interviewing process was considered complete. At this point a total of 15 interviews were conducted with characteristics of the sample shown on the Table 5 below:

Male	10	Female	5			
Age group	20-30	30-40	40-50	50-60	Over 60	
No of Interviewees	1	5	4	4	1	
Country of origin	IoM	UK	USA	SA	Portugal	Malta
No of Interviewees	5	5	1	2	1	1
Length of Residence	Working for/in conjunction with Government 3					
More than 10 years	5	Relocated for work *				4
Less than 10 years	5	Relocated businesses *				9

Table 5 Interview sample demographics

* These numbers included Manx residents who returned after having left the IoM for periods longer than 3 years, when the 3 years period of time relates to studies at Universities off island.

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE: As shown in Table 5, the sample was composed of five participants who were born and brought up in the IoM. The other ten participants had relocated to the IoM and despite the split in the length of residence 50% below ten years and the other 50% above ten years, this split was purely incidental.

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHICS: One third of the sample were females and two thirds were males. At the time of the interview (2019), participants were almost evenly split in the decades between 30 and 60 years old, with only one below 30 and one over 60 years old. Five participants had no children. Half of the relocated participants were from the UK. While it was not purposeful, after approaching the participants it became apparent that all the participants but one, were educated to degree level and above, with three of them holding a PhD.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS: The aim was to recruit participants that had relocated for work and relocated their businesses, local entrepreneurs and government representatives. Four participants had relocated for work and the other six had relocated with their businesses. However it was interesting that some of the participants that had relocated for work, after a certain period of time, they had started their own businesses so they were counted in both sections, as relocated for work and entrepreneurs. Also some of the Manx residents that had returned to the IoM after long periods off the Island, were recruited as participants because they had returned to start their own businesses in the IoM. Three of the participants were working for or in conjunction with the IoM government. So overall at the time of the interview, 14 participants (local and relocated) had their own business, with six of them running their businesses parallel with other employment.

In similar way as for the interview sample, purposive non-probabilistic sampling method was used to select the web-based media. Therefore the IoM government websites tasked to encourage and support the relocation of businesses and individuals to the IoM were selected.

3.5.2 Interviews

3.5.2.1 Interview protocol

Interviews were un-structured and in-depth. The interviews approach involved a relatively loosely structured interview protocol rather than a rigid highly structured set of interview questions (Appendix 1. Interview Protocol). The interviewees were asked only a few questions which were more of a topic boundary or prompts rather than questions per se, in order to avoid the interviewees going completely off topic (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008); however the aim was to be as nondirective as possible (Crotty, 1998; Yin, 2009) in order to gain the richness of interviewees' meanings.

Because one of the aims of the research was to analyse and compare how the IoM's image and identity was currently viewed by business people, all interviews opened with a broad question about the interviewee's perceptions of the IoM- what they personally believed/ felt its identity to be, so the question for the IoM residents was: "What is the IoM for you". People who had relocated to the IoM were also asked for their perception of the IoM, but a supplementary and perhaps more relevant question put to them was: "What made you come to the IoM?". The aim of this initial questioning was to explore the perceptions of the residents and Manx people (people born in the IoM) toward the place, in other words to try and explore the perceived identity of the residents. While the aim of the question for the people who have relocated was to explore what their perceptions of the IoM were before coming to the IoM and how that perceived image was formed and how it has developed over time.

Building on the initial reported perceptions of the IoM, the rest of the interview questions were designed to probe and explore the issues and influences on how the interviewees' perceptions of the IoM had been formed and shaped.

Despite the loose, un-structured nature of the interview protocol, the responses did follow broadly similar lines and explored a briefly common set of topic areas. The responses were diverse in terms of the areas of business and life that influenced the most the respondents' perceptions about the IoM, but also sometimes contradictory and sometimes they clustered round similar ideas. The responsiveness and even clarity of response did vary markedly across the sample, with some interviewees needing very little prompting and offered their views on various issues related to the Island quite willingly. However some other interviewees were less forthcoming in their responses. They were reluctant to reveal that much about their views about the Island and the recording was stopped and started several times on their request.

3.5.2.2 Interview process

Interviews were all conducted on a one to one basis and face to face, in settings where the interviewees were at ease. Most of the interviews took place in interviewees' offices or in one of the campus offices at the University College IoM, all dependent on interviewees' choice. Interviews lasted between 45mins and 1hour and 55mins.

Prior to launching the full interview process, a pilot interview was run in order to test whether the unstructured interviews would be suitable for exploring the research topic and to help the researcher familiarise with the interviewing process (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Following Bryman and Bell (2011) suggestion, the pilot interview respondent was selected based on the sample's characteristics, and could have potentially been part of the sample. The pilot interview lasted just over 1 hour. As there were no apparent issues with the interview protocol the rest of the interviews were conducted straight afterwards.

To ensure credibility of the research, information about the topic of the research, the method, purpose of the interview and other information was supplied to the interviewees before the interview took place (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). All interviews were audio recorded. After the interview, a copy of the recording and the transcription of the interview was offered to the interviewees and they were allowed to make changes if they wished. Interviewees could withdraw at any time, before, during or after the interview.

3.5.3 IoM government websites

Similar to the interview sampling, a purposive, non-probability sampling procedure was followed also for the web-based communications of the IoM Government because one of the aims of this research is to explore only web-based communications, which were specifically aimed at attracting new businesses and talented workforce. Many authors (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000; Florek et al., 2006; Ha et al., 1998) suggest that web based communications can be used to fulfil a number of functions such as: to project a favourable image, to perform a number of marketing activities amongst which the dissemination of information, assistance to customer search and as point of customer information collection. The Department for Enterprise (DfE) website was initially selected for this research, considering that the DfE was tasked by the IoM Government to work on encouraging businesses and talented people to relocate.

DfE is structurally organised in 5 agencies, each responsible for a specific area into which the government is looking to diversify the economy and attract people and businesses: Business IoM, Digital IoM, Finance IoM, Locate IoM and Visit IoM. Each of the agencies have their own website which has a hyperlink in the homepage of the DfE website. For this research all six websites were analysed: DfE main website <https://www.iomdfenterprise.im/>, locate IoM <https://www.locate.im/>, business IoM <https://www.businessisleofman.com/>, digital IoM <https://www.digitalisleofman.com/>, finance IoM <https://www.financeisleofman.com/>, and visit IoM <https://www.visitisleofman.com/>, because, while the first five agencies are actively engaged in the campaign to attract businesses and workforce, visit IoM agency's activity is paramount in building the image of the IoM as the first point of contact through tourism.

Within these websites, only content, in terms of text, news articles, events coverage, blogs and images, published during 2019, were selected for analysis. As most of the websites selected were developed during 2018, only content published during 2019 was selected for analysis. All the websites contained 522 images. From these images 128 were not considered as they were duplicated in different websites. The other 394 images were considered for analysis.

Locate IoM and Visit IoM websites included several videos, however, this type of content was not included in the analysis sample as it was considered not to bring any new meaning above and beyond text and images, rather contributed more to the level of interactivity of the websites, specifically the playfulness feature (Ha et al., 1998), which is out of the scope of the chosen methodology. Similarly content from external links was not taken into consideration as it simply was supporting the points already made within the page under study. Further information, such as website's analytics in terms

of page visits, bounce rates and more, were considered out of scope conceptually and methodologically because the aim of the research is to compare and contrast perceptions of the IoM residents with the way that IoM is portrayed rather than evaluate the success of the website in quantitative form.

3.6 Data analysis

3.6.1 Interviews

The interviews were transcribed verbatim and coded, in order to generate the key themes from the data (Bryman & Bell, 2011). A number of authors (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Elliott, 2018; Miles et al., 2014) recommend the use of software such as CAQDAS, NVivo for data analysis which aid and speed up the process of coding and retrieving data/ themes/ codes. However, the downside of an easy coding process is the danger of the researcher being “drawn into the data”(p.2858) and losing the bigger picture (Elliott, 2018). Taking into consideration the advantages, disadvantages and availability of the technology in data analysis, NVivo software was selected and used as a repository for the transcribed interviews and to aid the manual coding, looking for possible links between codes and retrieving themes during data analysis process (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

Interviews were analysed using Thematic Analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994), which is one of the methods for “identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes)” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.79) within rich unstructured data collected through interviews (Waring & Wainwright, 2008). Following a constructionist epistemology, thematic analysis can be used to explore how meanings, realities, experiences are constructed through communication within society (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For this reason the search for themes expanded across all the interviews, rather than restricting them within individual interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Thematic analysis of the interviews were inductive, so bottom up, at both semantic and latent level which allowed for exploration of underlying ideas and assumptions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). As this process unavoidably involved the researcher’s sense making, from the axiological point of view, it made this research value bound (Yin, 2016).

Thematic analysis were conducted following Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six phases of thematic analysis as shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6 Phases of Thematic Analysis

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarising yourself with your data:	Interviews were transcribed verbatim and to ensure accuracy, transcripts were all checked twice against the recordings. This also helped familiarising with the data and generating initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes:	Initial ideas were teased out the transcripts and coded, looking for patterns or interesting topics within and amongst the interviews which related directly or indirectly to the research questions. Initial coding was done at both semantic level, by coding ideas as they were explicitly expressed by the interviewees, and at the latent level, where the focus was more on the assumptions underpinning what the interviewees had said (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The inductive thematic analysis requires use of open coding which means that no set codes were decided apriori, rather codes were generated from the data. As the coding process was conducted by one individual, several coding exercises were undertaken to ensure inclusion of as many as possible interpretations of the data (Douglas, Hamilton, & Grubs, 2009).
3. Searching for themes:	Similar codes were tabulated in categories or potential subthemes. The subthemes were further reviewed to generate main themes which DeSantis and Ugarriza (2000) define as “an abstract entity that brings meaning and identity to a recurrent experience and its variant manifestations. As such, a theme captures and unifies the nature or basis of the experience into a meaningful whole” (p.362)
4. Reviewing themes:	Themes and subthemes were reviewed to ensure that they worked both at the extract level and the entire dataset
5. Defining and naming themes:	Themes were refined and defined through several iterations

6. Producing the report:	The final report was produced as a result, based on the themes and supported by several extracts from the dataset (Findings section).
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1.1.1 IoM Government Websites

The text and image content of six websites was copied and pasted into word documents preserving the originating website structure. This process was conducted for two reasons: a) ensuring that further updates of the websites would not compromise the consistency of the data being analysed, and b) to aid the manual coding of the text content through the use of NVivo software (White & Marsh, 2006).

Content analysis method was selected for the analysis of the text content of the website because this method has been used historically as a means of analysing the mass-media content (Green-Saraisky, 2015; Macnamara, 2010; Mayring, 2014). Content analysis can be used for both quantitative and qualitative research. The quantitative method relies mostly in counting and frequency of terms and phrases to interpret meanings (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004; Mayring, 2014). Downe-Wamboldt (1992) suggests that qualitative content analysis consists of identification of themes and patterns through coding, in order to be able to interpret the meaning of the text content. The quantitative content analysis method was considered not to be appropriate for this research because as noted by Graneheim, Lindgren and Lundman (2017) the epistemological basis of this methodology support a positivistic stance which searches for meaning through statistical methods in the objective reality of text. This does not align with the social constructionist epistemology of this research, which considers meaning as socially constructed by website authors and the website audience (including the researcher). However it is important to highlight that meaning derived from the website analysis relates only to the researcher's interpretation of the website messages.

The two data sets, the interviews and the website content, were analysed using two different methods because:

- a. thematic analysis looks for deeper meanings in the perceptions of the individuals and how these perceptions influence the social reality (Braun & Clarke, 2006), therefore it was deemed a suitable method for interview data analysis,
- b. the qualitative content analysis focuses on the likely meaning that the text conveys to the audiences in a particular context (Macnamara, 2010); this makes it a suitable method for the web-based communication analysis.

Even though thematic analysis and qualitative content analysis are different methods, they have similarities in terms of reliance on the researcher's interpretation (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Graneheim & Lundman, 2004; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Macnamara, 2010; Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013), which concurred with the theoretical perspective of this research, and both methods "can answer the same set of research questions" (Vaismoradi et al., 2013, p. 403). In addition, because people's subjectively constructed meanings were analysed through themes and patterns generated from following rigorously the phases of analysis of Braun and Clarke's (2006), it was deemed appropriate that the themes and patterns from the interviews be compared with themes and patterns identified from the analysis of the web-based communications, which likewise were generated from following rigorous steps of qualitative content analysis method of Elo and Kyngäs (2008), or as considered by Hsieh and Shannon (2005) the conventional content analysis.

As well as text content analysis, the website analysis involved images analysis. Van Leeuwen (2011) suggest that images can be analysed through visual semiotic analysis or iconography or a combination of both.

In iconography Sternberg (1997) suggests that analysis include identifying the staging of the motifs and thematising. The staging of the motifs relates to the main objects in the image, their position in relation to each other and the context or background (Govers & Go, 2008). Thematising refers to the association of the images (or connected motifs) with particular themes or concepts which are representations, symbolisms weaved through in cultures and are transmitted through reading of text, literature, history and so forth (Panofsky, 1972).

Similarly, visual semiotics analysis, which are perceived as a complementary method to iconography (Van Leeuwen, 2011), focus on the elements of the image and their meaning, which relate to what they represent or what message they convey to the viewer. Interestingly, Bell (2012) draws attention into the use of images to create ideological meanings, for which she suggests the use of critical visual semiotic analysis. Critical visual semiotics, in a similar way as the other two methods, analyses the elements of the image, their meanings but also the interaction between the elements amongst them and with the viewer.

Despite the fact that iconography has been used mostly to study art, Van Leeuwen (2011) suggest that iconography has been successfully used to study photographic images, similar to visual semiotics. In essence all three methods analyse similar factors such as the objects in the image, arrangements, contexts, style and messages or significance in order to create meaning, which are the features that

this research has aimed to unravel. Therefore a combination of iconography and visual semiotics was chosen for analysis of the websites' images.

3.6.1.1 Text content analysis

Text content was analysed using Qualitative Content Analysis method following Elo and Kyngäs' (2008) Process of Analysis (*Table 7* below). An inductive approach was taken in order to identify patterns and themes (Graneheim et al., 2017; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) in the way that the image of the IoM was portrayed by the government which could later be contrasted with the themes generated from the interviews.

Nielsen's (2000) web usability studies confirm that website visitors normally scan the webpage for information rather than reading everything and prefer the factual, to the point information over the long winded, complex with underlying ideas information. Therefore the coding was conducted at manifest level which refers to straight forward meaning of the text (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). However, beyond categories, latent meaning was considered in order to generate themes (Graneheim et al., 2017) because this research follows a constructionist approach where by the facticity and subjective meanings are deeply interwoven (Berger & Luckmann, 1991).

Table 7 Process of Content Analysis (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008)

Preparation	Sampling	The sample selected are websites of the IoM government dedicated to support the relocation initiative. DfE main website https://www.iomdfenterprise.im/ Business IoM https://www.businessisleofman.com/ Digital IoM https://www.digitalisleofman.com/ Finance IoM https://www.financeisleofman.com/ Locate IoM https://www.locate.im/ Visit IoM https://www.visitisleofman.com/
	Unit of Analysis	Meaning unit was defined as any clause, sentence or paragraph that contained a central meaning (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). Each website was considered as unit of analysis as each of them represents a different context for meaning units (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004).

		Manifest content was chosen for coding process.
	Familiarising with data	Familiarisation with data consisted of careful reading of the content of all the websites to understand the bigger picture (Vaismoradi et al., 2013)
	Inductive or deductive approach	Analysis followed an inductive approach because the aim of the study is not theory testing (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008), rather exploration of what is there (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) and based on the insights, identify strategies that can assist the process of attraction.
Organising	Coding	Graneheim and Lundman (2004) define codes as labels of meaning units. Data was coded (labelled) following open coding, which means the codes were generated by the data rather than created apriori (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).
	Categorisation	Codes were grouped into categories based in their meanings, similarities and differences (Assarroudi, Heshmati Nabavi, Armat, Ebadi, & Vaismoradi, 2018)
	Abstraction and interpretation	Abstraction process consisted of grouping categories in higher level (main) categories (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008) and it developed further into interpretation or latent content which was the basis for generating the themes (Graneheim et al., 2017).
Reporting	This phase involved reporting the analysis process and the findings (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008).	

3.6.1.2 Image analysis

Following on Van Leeuwen's (2011) Barthean visual semiotics, Bell's (2012) critical visual semiotics and iconographical analysis (Panofsky, 1972; Sternberg, 1997) the following scheme was devised for image analysis.

Table 8 Image analysis

Website	The URLs of pages where the images were taken from were all noted down (Govers & Go, 2008)
Primary subjects/denotative signifiers, Background/context, Motifs/Denotative signified	The main subjects of the images were identified in terms of people, objects or symbols in front of the image (Bell, 2012; Sternberg, 1997). Background or context related to elements appearing behind the main subjects (Govers & Go, 2008). Further was identified what the subjects or background signified (Van Leeuwen, 2011)
Arrangements/ style/connotator. Connotation/interactive meaning	The subjects' position in relation to the viewer or other elements in the image, and style features were used to indicate the relations between the subjects amongst them and with the viewer (Bell, 2012; Van Leeuwen, 2011)
Text Theme	The accompanying text theme was identified and checked in relation to image (Van Leeuwen, 2011)
Representation/Message	The message of the image was interpreted based on all the elements above and the culture and knowledge of the researcher (Panofsky, 1972; Van Leeuwen, 2011)
Category	Messages were classified in categories based on similarities
Main themes	Categories were used to generate themes

The themes generated by both text and image content were collated and reported in the Findings Section.

3.7 Research quality

Bryman and Bell (2011) suggest that the quality of the research can be evaluated in terms of reliability, replication and validity. In quantitative research Hammersley (1987) defines validity and reliability as "goals of the measurement process"(p.80). Some of these criteria do not apply to this research because: firstly this is not quantitative research and secondly looking at the criteria from the

qualitative research point of view, reliability and replications are quality criteria which cannot be fulfilled by this research; by design this is a case study which cannot be separated from its unique cultural context (Stake, 2000) and by virtue cannot be replicated or generate results that can be repeated anywhere else (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008).

In terms of validity, Bryman and Bell (2011) suggest that it is “the most important criterion of the research”(p.42) and they distinguish four different types, namely: measurement validity, internal validity, external validity and ecological validity.

The notions of measurement and internal validity are criteria mostly for quantitative research, and as stated previously this was a qualitative research which did not involve measurements in quantitative terms or searched for causality, rather generated themes from opinions and texts.

External validity criterion, similarly to reliability, could not be fulfilled because the conclusions of this research apply only to the unique context of the IoM and cannot be generalised.

The ecological validity evaluates whether the research instrument enables the capture of the perceptions and opinions of people in real life (Cicourel, 1982), which is congruent with Bashir, Afzal and Azeem's (2008) conclusion that “the claim of validity rests on data collection and analysis techniques and instrument, the researcher in qualitative paradigm” (p.44). The fulfilment of the ecological criterion was enabled from the research design and the data collection instrument. The research design, the case study method, amongst others requires the event or phenomena to be studied in a real life context (Yin, 2009), and data triangulation (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018), considered by Bashir et al. (2008) as one of the ways to enhance validity of the research. The selected data collection instrument enabled both data triangulation and capture of real life context, through the website content and the un-structured interviews which, by being as non-directive as possible (Crotty, 1998; Yin, 2018), allowed interviewees to freely express their views and opinions related to the research question (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

With regards to the researchers role in qualitative research, a number of authors (V. Braun & Clarke, 2006; Bryman & Bell, 2011; Vaismoradi & Snelgrove, 2019; Yin, 2018) insist on the importance of the researcher's interpretation and sense-making as a crucial feature of the research. However, Graneheim and Lundman (2004) see the role of the researcher as a “balancing act” between interpretation and “‘let the text talk’ and not impute meaning that is not there”(p.111), for which it was made sure that the research findings were well supported by direct quotes and images.

Yin (2018) also suggest a test to avoid the researcher's bias, by identifying whether the researcher is willing to accept research findings contrary to their belief. Therefore throughout the interviewing process, time was taken to identify findings and share them with colleagues and supervisors, in order to test the researcher's openness for contrary findings.

While the researcher has various views and beliefs and similarly to some of the participants, had relocated to the IoM 15 years prior to the research start, taking time to reflect on own positionality in relation to research participants (Day, 2012; Jacobson & Mustafa, 2019) was one of the influences in selecting the unstructured interviews as a method of primary data collection. Keeping the questions to a bare minimum, helped to avoid leading the participants on what they had to say and how they expressed it, thus allowing them the freedom to discuss any topics or issues that mattered to them, but at the same time were within the research boundaries. Frequently during the interviews the participants asked the researcher to express her views on what they were discussing. Following Day's (2012) suggestions and considering her own positionality towards the participants, the topics being discussed and the philosophical approach underpinning the research, the researcher deemed it appropriate to make it clear to the participants that what mattered at that moment were their views, whatever they were, because the aim was not to prove/disprove or agree/disagree with anything or anybody rather to explore/discover what was there. Even though the qualitative research relies on researcher's interpretation (V. Braun & Clarke, 2006), by aiming to maintain a neutral position throughout the research, following frequent reflections on positionality, helped keep the focus on the aim of the research, which was not to identify whether the views about the IoM were positive or negative, rather identify them as they were in order to enable exploration of various branding and marketing strategic options.

In addition Hammersley (2005) suggests that as part of the research validity, it is important in qualitative research to look for plausibility and credibility of the argument (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Plausibility and credibility of the research was supported by the link between the conclusions and the findings of the datasets, also ensuring that the findings were clearly evidenced (Hammersley, 2005) through the samples of the analytical process (see appendix 2,3,4,5) and the direct quotes and images (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004).

Furthermore, the respondent validation process was followed in the interviews and an account of the interview transcript was given to all the interviewees who were willing to review and make changes (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

Also to increase construct validity, once the research was completed, some of the key informants were requested to review the whole draft report (Yin, 2018).

3.8 Ethics

This research was conducted following the University of Chester (UoC), Faculty of Business and Management Ethical Guidelines, and is guided by the Chartered Association of the Business Schools (CABS) Ethics Guide 2015. CABS Ethics Guide (2015) suggests eight principles which provided a practical framework that was followed throughout this research and the discussion that follows will highlight how this framework was applied.

The principle of integrity, honesty and transparency requires the researcher to be self-critical about their capabilities, to be open about their own biases (social, political) and ensure that their research is a reflection of the data collected and their analysis. Throughout the research several conversations with colleagues and supervisors have taken place in order to ensure that the personal biases were kept in check and the research methodology through the data collection and analysis process would enable the research results to reflect the transparency of the process followed. Also all the research participants were specifically given details of the research prior to being invited for the interview and the draft report before submission was offered to all participants for review.

The second principle requires respect for the persons and prevention of harm. As the sampling method was purposive, the criteria for selection of the participants involved issues such as length of residence on the IoM and whether they relocated for work or business. While these criteria were followed strictly, it was deemed beneficial and highly important for the research quality to have a high degree of variation in the opinions, therefore effort was put into identifying a mix of gender, age and variety of countries where respondents came from, so rather than being discriminatory the sample was inclusive. Even though the research participation did not involve any physical or emotional harm, it was ensured that if the respondents felt uncomfortable with the topic they discussed they could withdraw at any time and any record of their interview would be destroyed.

Adherence to the authorship and respect of intellectual property principle was enabled through the strict use of APA referencing guidelines and by requesting the participants for copyrights clearance prior to the interviews (Bryman & Bell, 2011). With regards to the copyrights of the content in the websites, the statement at the bottom of the websites “OGL - All content is available under the Open Government Licence, except where otherwise stated” (Department for Enterprise, 2020b) implied permission on the use of the content “freely and flexibly with only few conditions” (Isle of Man Government, 2020). The few conditions related to personal data and information on third parties. No

personal data were collected from the websites or used for this research, or any information covered by third party copyright.

Prior to the interviews, the participants were requested to give explicit consent for participating. They were provided with information about the research, its aims and how those aims would be achieved and should they agree to take part, to sign the consent form. The participants were also advised that should they wish to withdraw or change anything in their interview they could do so before, during or after the interview. As a result two participants who initially agreed to participate withdrew before the interviews, while some of the participants made changes to the interview transcripts. In another interview the recording was stopped and started several time to ensure that what was recorded was only what the participant wanted to be on the interview transcript.

Another important principle is the protection of privacy by ensuring confidentiality and anonymity for the research participants. Despite the fact the revealing of the identity did not pose any risk to participants, erring on the side of caution, the identity of the interviewees was safeguarded through anonymising the transcripts, even when the interviewees requested to uplift their anonymity. Following on Saunders et al. (2012) suggestion, contextual data was stored separately from the interview transcripts, and “keys” were created to ensure the link between the two sets of data. The GDPR guidelines were followed to protect all data that could identify the interviewees.

The information provided to research participants included a declaration of the researcher’s professional affiliation with the University College IoM (UCM) and the fact that this research is conducted as part of the researcher’s doctoral study at the UoC. It was also made clear that even though the UCM is a government owned institution, this research has been funded by the UCM as part of their investment in staff development and has not been conducted on behalf or upon request of the IoM government.

In adherence with the last two principles which relate to avoid misleading, misunderstanding and unjustified deception and following good governance practices, ethical approval was sought by the Ethics Committee at the UoC Business School prior to starting the research. The choice of data collection, the unstructured interviews ensured that participants were not guided into expressing their views, rather were allowed to expand in whichever area they found they had something to say as long as it was broadly within research boundaries. Also the research was made available to all participants prior to submission so they could view how their views were presented. Also to enhance transparency a copy of one interview transcript is included in the Appendix 1 and samples of the analysis processes such as coding, are shown in the Appendix 2.

3.9 Limitations of the methodology

While it might have been more appropriate to collect the opinion of business people outside the IoM through interviews, the same as for inside the IoM, this was not practically possible. This is because the researcher resides in the IoM. While it was practical to identify business people in the IoM (a place with only 86,000 habitants), the lack of information on the business people in the UK and Ireland who were looking to relocate their business, made the task of identifying and interviewing these people impossible. This is one of the limitations of this study.

The views presented in this research belong to people who live in the IoM and perhaps access to the views of the people who have left the IoM would have created a more balanced picture. Similarly, as per the previous paragraph, it was impossible to identify and interview people who had already left the IoM, even though some of their views vaguely/indirectly come into the discussion from some of the participants stories.

Another limitation of the study relates to the website data. Ideally access to the specific guidance behind the messages strategy that the websites are aiming to deliver would have enabled a better comparison between the IoM identity and the IoM brand identity. Instead, the messages from the websites (the end output produced) were interpreted by the researcher in the form of the messaging themes which were derived from the qualitative content analysis.

This was a cross sectional study which took three years to complete. Interviews took place between February 2019 and December 2019. Websites content was collected during January 2020 and February 2020. As people's perceptions about places change over time, the study of these changes would have perhaps suited a longitudinal study and might potentially represent another limitation of this study.

4 Chapter 4. Findings

The previous chapter provided the rationale for the methodology followed in order to fulfil the aim of this research. The aim of the research was broken down into four objectives. This chapter aims to address the first three research objectives.

Objective 1. To analyse and compare the way in which the Isle of Man (IoM)'s identity and image are currently perceived and understood amongst business owners and talented people who currently live in the IoM

In order to achieve this objective, 15 interviews were conducted with business people and talented people drawn from small/medium companies operating in the IoM. Findings generated from the analysis of the interviews are presented in the section 4.1 below.

Objective 2. To analyse how the IoM is portrayed through the IoM government web -based communications aimed at businesses and talented people looking to relocate

This objective was addressed through analysis of text and images of six government websites. Detailed outcomes of these analysis are presented in section 4.2 further on.

Objective 3. To compare and contrast the way which the IoM is portrayed through government web based communications with the perceptions of the IoM held by the business people in the IoM

Concluding this chapter, the outcomes generated from the analysis of the interviews and the websites were compared and contrasted to provide insights that contributed in the achievement of Objective 3.

4.1 Interview findings

Following the thematic analysis of 15 interviews, the presentation of findings has been organised to reflect what emerged as in two main, sometimes contradictory, perceptions of the IoM expressed by the same interviewees depending on the 'perceptual lens' through which they considered the IoM.

In examining the findings of the research with business people drawn from the small business sector, the first section of the analysis will focus on exploring and explaining the way in which the interviewees perceive the IoM as a setting in which to do business. In the second part, conversely the focus will be on views expressed about the IoM as a place to live and bring up families.

Each section is organised around one main theme and the contributing subthemes. The subthemes capture the different factors which shaped the perceptions of the business people about the IoM. They were generated from codes that reflected similar or opposite ideas on the same issue, pertinent to the research aims. A summary of themes and subthemes follows below:

Theme 1. The importance of an attractive business environment

Subtheme 1.1. The importance of public business support services

Subtheme 1.2. The attraction of funding and financial support

Subtheme 1.3. Tax benefits – the rose tinted glasses to view the IoM

Subtheme 1.4. The perceived remoteness of location

Subtheme 1.5. Talent is in short supply

Theme 2. The priority of the lifestyle

Subtheme 2.1. Living in the IoM is a balancing act

Subtheme 2.2. Money, morals and moaning

Subtheme 2.3. The spill-over effect of UK's image

Subtheme 2.4. The unfulfilled welcome promise

Each theme and the subthemes will be discussed in detail in the following sections.

4.1.1 Theme 1. The importance of the attractive business conditions

One overriding theme to emerge from business interviewees was how important it was for new businesses to experience a very positive and welcoming environment when trying to set up and get their businesses off the ground. Here this notion of a receptive and supportive business environment comprised an array of tangible and not so tangible factors/subthemes. This overall theme captures how perceptions of the business people about the IoM are strongly influenced by the experiences that they have had from setting up or relocating their businesses to the IoM, to conducting business from the IoM and aiming to grow and expand. These perceptions appeared critical in their decisions to stay or leave the IoM. Some of the interviewees (3, 9) who relocated more than 10 years ago, viewed the IoM in a very positive light because they found the process of setting up easy and straight forward and in the

cases where they were not sure how to proceed, they used the support of their friendship networks. “The IoM is who you know not what you know” was an expression that was repeated frequently by most of the interviewees. As interviewee 9 noted, if it was not for the support network, they “would not even know where to start”, which for interviewees 5 and 14 could have been as simple as a “Starter Pack” or a forum where business people could meet on a regular basis and build these networks.

Other interviewees, especially the ones who set up or relocated their businesses in the past ten years or very recently had a contrasting view about the IoM because their experience of setting up their business was the opposite of some of the other interviewees, as one interviewee (2) put it “far too difficult, too complicated, too expensive”. For them the system in place to assist with business set up “was just broken” (interviewee 2) and perhaps the government was relying too much on the Corporate Service Providers (CSPs) for assistance. Because the government was the businesses’ first point of contact in relocating to the IoM and the gateway to relocate and establish their business, the respondents’ perception on the supporting role of the government generated the following subtheme.

Subtheme 1.1. The importance of public business support services

This subtheme, generated from the respondents perceptions about the government support, related to the ease or not with which businesses could get started and thrive within the IoM. Here interviewees expressed some contradictory views.

As most of the operational activities of the government were frequently compared to the UK government, digitalisation was an area where the business people felt that the processes were still behind the times (interviewee 2,3,11). Interviewee 11 mentioned that when asked by their customers about relocating their businesses to the IoM, their answer was: “it hurts me to say this but, come to live to the IoM but don’t bring your business with you... IoM is a difficult place to do business”, because the same processes of establishing businesses which take only a couple of hours in the UK, take more than 5 months in the IoM. All the interviewees observed that the government are trying hard to attract businesses, but evidently bureaucracy was getting in the way and for many issues that businesses were raising, the government was only paying lip service (interviewee 10,13). Likewise when it came to change or improvement, interviewee 15 observed that the same lazy attitude and resistance to change as local staff, was evident in government departments in the form of “we’ve always done it this way”.

The government official highlighted that there are a lot of perceptions and misconceptions about what the government are doing or not, however, interviewee 10 pointed out that government communications lacked transparency. While the government is offering grants through the financial

support schemes for the start-ups and relocated business, these are tax payers money and there is no communication to show where the money was spent and what benefit the Manx public has gained from all these schemes (interviewee 10,13). The lack of transparent communications has created the space for a whole lot of perceptions, such as corruption, nepotism, unfair dealings etcetera, and at the same time raised questions about government accountability (interviewee 5,10,13).

The slow and reactive image of the government for interviewee 8 was evident in the way the government is only firefighting the financial issues like the pensions deficit, which for them clearly demonstrates lack of long-term vision (interviewee 8,11). While for most of the interviewees the decision to increase the population has been welcomed in the hope of creating economies of scale and inciting competition for local businesses, for interviewee 8 it is not the right approach to solve the pensions' deficit or the income shortage from the UK VAT agreement. Instead the government should have looked for innovative solutions within pension contributions and found ways by encouraging public-private partnerships. Also two interviewees (6,9) suggested that increasing population is a bit of "catch 22" as this will bring the financial benefits to the island, however, it raises the question whether the Island will still be the same safe, quiet, green, idyllic place.

Nevertheless, the issue whether IoM would still be a safe place did not seem to worry the other interviewees rather one of them questioned whether the government would be able to attract a certain high calibre professionals (interviewee 10) and the overall consensus seem to be that the government does not seem to have an understanding what these professionals and start-ups need, to be able to facilitate the process for them (interviewee 2,3,10,11,12,13). For the interviewees, the government's main focus appears to be the expansion of the job market, as most of the financing schemes revolve round the number of jobs created or office rents; these will increase the tax receipts and as consequence will fill in the pension deficit. This focus makes the start-ups feel under pressure to grow quick and employ more people, and encourages them to relocate (interviewee 10). Unfortunately some interviewees did not see this as a viable option because for them, this is what the new digital businesses seem to go away from, through work from home or use of contractors from all over the world (interviewee 3,11).

Most of the businesses (local and relocated) viewed the IoM as the place where it's all about "who you know rather than what you know" in terms of facilitation of bureaucratic procedures (interviewee 3,5,7,9, 15). Some of the interviewees found the processes easy and seamless because they had friends or people they knew to guide them (interviewee 3, 9), while others found them cumbersome, behind the times and far from their initial impressions (interviewee 5,11,14). Interviewee 6 pointed out that:

“As a Manxman I’m very proud about the Island but I’m also very disappointed in our government. As I said I’ve had no help at all from the government, in fact they’ve been quite detrimental in setting up my business.”

Interviewees 9 and 10 spoke highly about the government frontline staff, especially tax office, however, they noticed that for other departments the processes were slow and inefficient, not to mention the issue of where to start and who to contact first (interviewee 9,14). And at this point all the markers in government were pointing towards the CSPs. For some of the local interviewees this was not intentional rather a way to fill in the gaps in processes or old legislation (interviewee 10,12). For other interviewees however, the use of CSPs appeared to be a frustrating factor and bore many negative connotations. The relocated businesses felt that they were being steered toward the CSPs for advice, as an attempt to provide market for the CSPs (interviewee 2,5), while they had already noticed that CSPs Association was very active and very close to the government which raised suspicions (interviewee 11).

Some interviewees (2,5,11) expressed dissatisfaction with the whole process and as expressed by the interviewee 5:

“The problem is a lot of the stuff is quite bureaucratic here. I think it's probably the second, you know, when you come over here, you get introduced to all sorts of different people, you know, you're kind of flavour of the month.... So it's like, it's like being a new girl in town and going to the disco, right. And so you get to meet all these people but yeah, the problem is a lot of that it's always the same. It's the same people. It's the Manx Telecoms, Domicilium, you know, lawyers, company service providers (CSPs). Pretty much all the people that I don't want to work with here.”

While the CSPs would provide financial, legal, administration services, their fees were deemed extortionate, especially by the start-ups, which would see this whole process as a way to drain the funding they had secured from the government or the investors (interviewee 2). Interviewee 5 put into context by mentioning that one of the businesses they were working with, for the same service in Liverpool were quoted £5,000, while in the IOM were quoted £50,000. For the start-ups would be hard to justify to their investors these kind of fees and make the funding overall very hard to obtain (interviewee 2). As far as funding was concerned, another important subtheme emerged from the respondents’ perceptions which will be explored further in the next section.

Subtheme 1.2. Attraction of funding and financial support

Financial support in the form of funding and grants, emerged as a very important factor in making a business environment attractive. Some of the interviewees expressed that there was very little support for the start-ups with very few government funding schemes compared to the UK (interviewee 11). Also the access to those funding schemes was uneven between the sectors of economy, the types of business in terms of local or relocated, and stages of the business. For example there were a few options for established businesses in manufacturing, but none in social services and healthcare (interviewee 15), or more complicated processes for start-ups than the established businesses. Despite the fact that “there's a lot of wealth on the Isle of Man that isn't really very public” (interviewee 12), start-ups were finding it hard to raise finance (interviewee 2). For interviewee 12 this was the case that the start-ups “did not know how and who to approach for investment”.

However, some of the established businesses viewed the IoM as great place to do business, because they found the government funding an appealing incentive. Interviewee 14 considered the process to obtain this type of funding straightforward and the whole scheme enticing to relocate their business to the IoM.

“We have taken advantage of the 40% grant on purchases. And we have taken advantage of that. And it's been very, very useful. And it's been easy to process, easy to the release of money. It's been easy and it's been, it's been good.”

Similarly one of the start-ups (interviewee 13) commented that even though they had to attend a course which was not appropriate for their type of business, completing it helped them have access to the much needed funding. After the course, the process was straight-forward and the funding helped get their business off the ground.

However, some interviewees had observed that the cost of bringing the resources to the Island and getting the products off the Island for some businesses was prohibitive, but these businesses did that only for as long as they could access the funding (interviewee 10), viewing the IoM as a “free pot of money” (interviewee 13) and no intention to establish.

On the other hand some of the local entrepreneurs felt that the focus of the government was on building a good image for the relocated businesses, for which all sorts of funding and supporting schemes were made available, while the local businesses were neglected (interviewee 2,6,9,11). Interviewee 11 used as an example two of their start-up customers, who were nearly identical in terms of age, business idea and model. However, IoM government chose to support the entrepreneur from the UK who relocated

to the IoM, while the local entrepreneur had to relocate to the UK for exactly the same reasons that other one relocated to the IoM. Both businesses did extremely well, yet, the net effect for the IoM was nil. In a similar way the small businesses think that the government supports more the big businesses rather than the small ones.

Another type of financial support for businesses are the tax benefits such as zero corporate tax or zero inheritance tax and the cap on income tax. However, tax benefits were viewed in different light by different interviewees and are the subject of the subtheme below.

Subtheme 1.3. Tax benefits – the rose tinted glasses to view the IoM

This subtheme reflects how zero corporate tax and other tax benefits available in the IoM appear to have strong influences in the perceptions of the business people about the IoM. For most of the interviewees, the taxation regime has positively coloured their perceptions about the island, as the driver behind their decisions to relocate to the IoM. For some of the interviewees the tax benefits have maintained a positive impact in the perception about the IoM, despite impacting the way in which they present their business to the world outside the IoM. Yet, for some people taxes mattered very little or not at all and had no impact on their perceptions about the IoM.

Some interviewees viewed taxation policy as a very positive factor which combined with government support was the only reason for relocating their business, (interviewee 5, 10, 14). Reduction of the tax bill appeared to be an attraction factor for some of the established digital nomads which, as expressed by interviewee 3, “when it comes to choose a place for this group of entrepreneurs the financial benefits come first because their business can run from anywhere as long as basic infrastructure exist”. Moreover, interviewees 2 and 3 noted that as other jurisdictions are offering very similar tax benefits, the IoM will have to up their game and offer other benefits.

Based on the recent developments with Panama Papers and reputational issues the IoM has faced, the “tax haven” label for the IoM did not feel comfortable for some interviewees, while for others did not seem fair, as they saw the level of taxation set by the government as a matter of independence (interviewee 1,4,6). For them each country decides for themselves what taxes they collect and how they collect them; so does the IoM.

Issues of the tarnished reputation due to the taxation regime, also appeared to influence how some interviewees presented their businesses to off Island customers. Interviewee 1 would not link their business with anything related to the IoM and avoid mentioning to the customers unless they asked,

while interviewee 11 had set up another business in the UK and depending on their customers view on taxation policies they would connect them to the appropriate part of their business.

Despite the reputation that the IoM has gained because of its taxation policies, the private sector is still attracted by the tax benefits and they support the IoM taxation regime, however, its review was considered a necessity for some of the interviewees in order to turn it into a tool that would be used to revive the economy rather than as a way that brings benefits only to a small number of people (interviewee 2,10,12). For some of the interviewees it is time to change the tax narrative and present the tax benefits in a different way (interviewee 8,12), while for others taxation is an ethical and moral issue which needs to be reconsidered (interviewee 2,10,11).

Yet not all the interviewees viewed the tax benefits in the same way. For the start-ups the tax benefits are non-existent for the first few years of activity, so what made a place attractive was the funding (interviewee 2,11,12). Interestingly for interviewee 15 the tax situation was contrary to the rest of the respondents. Not only their business not benefit by zero corporate tax, because their business in the UK was under the threshold, thus they had the same benefit there, rather they had to pay more income tax in the IoM. So at this point for them the only attraction to relocate to the IoM was the customer base.

Overall for most of the interviewees (1,3,5,8,9,14) taxation appeared to be the only reason that would make them view the IoM in a positive light and as a consequence the main attraction for relocating the businesses, to the extent that interviewee 14 called it the “tax trap” because this was why they were prepared to put up with the issues of island’s infrastructure and accessibility which will be discussed in the next subtheme.

Subtheme 1.4. The perceived remoteness of location

Another subtheme to emerge from careful interpretation of interview data, was the importance attached to the infrastructure and services issues which appeared to cause frustration in the activities of the businesses and individuals, regardless whether they were local or relocated. The interviewees went to lengths to emphasize the issues which related to their businesses directly, but also issues that their customers and suppliers were facing as well because indirectly these issues were impacting their businesses.

For all of the interviewees one of the most significant factors affecting their perception of IoM as a business location was the transport infrastructure that facilitates physical access to the IoM which presented a challenge in terms of cost and frequency of flights and sailings. For all the people who have relocated, getting off and on the Island was more than a business matter. Not being able to go off to big

cities and centres for most of them reinforced the perception of being far from the buzz of development and being stuck behind the times (interviewee 2,3,5,14). For some business people, good access to big financial centres like London or Manchester (interviewee 14) was a necessity to do business, while for others being able to go to the UK for weekends would make up for the lack of entertainment and ease the boredom (interviewee 2, 5). The costs of travelling both by sea and air were found to be prohibitive for some of the individual's budgets and quite heavy for the businesses too (interviewee 2,5,6). Nonetheless, some interviewees (12, 13) stressed that the travel charges were no different than in other parts of the UK.

The state of telecommunications for many interviewees was deemed another contributing factor in the "out dated" image of the IoM. All the interviewees across the sample emphasised that the lack of competition in telecommunications had created a lousy environment in this field which was undermining the process of attracting especially IT businesses (interviewee 1,5,9). For the IT businesses a good telecommunication infrastructure is paramount for their business development, however, the quality of broadband and the high cost of phone calls was becoming a deterrent (interviewee 1,5,9).

Postal service appeared to create similar frustrations and add to the "behind the times" and "remote" image of the IoM (interviewee 13,14). Interviewee 14 added that a few of the engineering businesses working with them were constantly getting fined because of the failures in the postal services to deliver their items on time.

In addition to the telecoms sector, the banking sector, which has dominated the Manx economy in the past thirty years, presented a challenge for the relocated businesses, especially the IT start-ups and the younger generation reinforcing the "behind the times" image of the IoM. While the major banks have made progress in the UK in terms of technological update of their processes, their branches in the IoM appear to have fallen behind in this area and as noted by one interviewee (3) "they pretend to give a good service, but they aren't". Interviewee 11 highlighted that for the "digital natives is unconceivable to fill in forms with pen and paper", yet, this was a requirement for most of the banking processes in the IoM, irrespective of which banks were involved. Interviewee 2 confided that it took them 8 months of bureaucracy and paperwork to open a bank account for their business despite having excellent credit rating.

As well as being known for outdated, slow manual processes, banks also appeared reluctant to finance businesses in the IoM, due to IoM specific legislation which has forced them to take further protective measures in terms of banking products facilitation (interviewee 2, 11, 15).

Legislation in the IoM appeared to represent another factor contributing to IoM's backward image. Some of the laws that business people had to consult, were quite old and written in old English, which even for the English native speakers would require translation or engagement of lawyers (interviewee 2). However, engaging with lawyers was the last resort for the start-ups as they did not want to spend their money on lawyers (interviewee 11). While the multinational businesses were far more inclined to engage lawyers from the UK or anywhere else (interviewee 5) because they viewed Manx legal system as corrupt, as explicitly stated by interviewee 5: "I presume you know about advocates writing and editing judgements on behalf of the Deemsters (*judge in the IoM*) in favour of their clients". The absurdity they faced when dealing with the IoM legal system was described as "Kafka meets Alice in Wonderland".

Subtheme 1.5. Talent is in short supply

This subtheme was generated from an important concern: businesses found it hard to find the right workforce in the IoM. They viewed the local staff as lazy and unqualified, while the lifestyle in the IoM did not appeal to young professionals to relocate. As a result some of the businesses had stopped growing their base in the IoM and were looking for expansion somewhere else (interviewee 2).

As far as young and talented people, interviewees 2 and 7 viewed the IoM as the place that undermined their career due to the small size of the place and small number of the companies located in it. Career opportunities for talented people would come through moving from one company to the other (interviewee 2,7) because, as highlighted by interviewee (9), most of the businesses do not invest in staff development, they would rather employ people to do what they already know.

"I think that's probably in my mind, part of the problem for a lot of the companies here is a lot of these big companies are actually designed at, you know, they don't really train their own, they basically just take from the industry.... they literally pay recruiters, like, a massive amount of the guys first year salary, just literally to actually get him away, we feel like, I want, I'd rather spend that money to train the guy to do you know what he needs to do." (interviewee 9)

The lack of career opportunities combined with the lifestyle in the IoM and the lack of an integration programme into the island's life (for what it is) (interviewee 2,7, 14) has made the attraction of young talented workforce quite difficult. This was not helped by the fact that the IoM is competing with many other "buzz" places for these people, like London or Dublin (interviewee 2,4). The lack of talented workforce has created quite a strain especially in some of the big gambling companies relocated in the last decade or so, as their vacancies were not being filled (interviewee 2).

In contrast with talented workforce from off island, businesses viewed the local workforce as lazy and unqualified (interviewee 13,14). They found the work attitude of the young generation quite bad but they couldn't pinpoint whether this was a generational issue or a local issue. Interviewee 1 and 14 observed that the good living standard in the IoM and the low levels of unemployment have made the people lazy and laid back, noticeable especially in the building trade. Interviewee 13 expressed: "You know, it's me speaking very bluntly, the quality of staff on the Isle of Man is pretty poor". At the same time interviewees 9, 13 and 14 perceived the local workforce relatively more expensive than some parts of the UK. However, in contrast with the interviewees that had relocated to the IoM, a local interviewee (4) mentioned that back in the 1970's when banking sector moved to the IoM, relocated staff looked at Manx residents with prejudice and Manx accent was frowned upon. This indirectly explains the intentions of another local interviewee (6) when saying:

"but as a Manxman I'm starting a new business here, I've always said I want the Manx to get first, what's the word, the first choice, but I prefer to teach them first, new skills in *"particular industry"* for example, yeah? To give them a chance to work in the ... sector."

An interesting point was the fact that the government official confirmed that 52% of the residents in the IoM are non-Manx born which could potentially suggest several reasons: perhaps the relocated people's work habits changed once they relocated to the IoM; or the relocated people's view on the local workforce might potentially be coloured by stereotypes (interviewee 1); or due to very low levels of unemployment and small size workforce, employers might be forced to satisfice in their recruitment decisions and end up filling their vacancies with people who are available for work rather than people qualified for that specific job.

On another note, interviewee 3 had observed that young people were not encouraged to fulfil their potential in education, and education as whole in the IoM was only an "after thought". Yet other interviewees (4, 6, 9, 11, 14) considered education in the IoM of good quality which was reflected in the number of students studying across in the UK. Moreover, the interviewees 4 and 13 had observed that more than 50% of the Manx students, who achieved high results in high schools and went to study in the UK, were not returning on the island, rather looked for job opportunities in the UK. In addition the interviewees noticed that while the young people living in the IoM had great job opportunities beyond their capabilities, these jobs were not being advertised to Manx students who are studying in the UK and the attempts to attract them back to the IoM were a bit haphazard (interviewee 12,13).

In summary the business people view the IoM as a good place to do business in terms of financial benefits where taxation regime is perhaps the most significant factor and the few funding schemes help,

but on the other hand, respondents were highly critical of many of the IoM's support services and systems so necessary to the effective operation of businesses such as the transport access to and from the IoM, telecom/banking/postal services, workforce and overall the facilitation of setting up in the IoM. The mantra is: "IoM is who you know not what you know".

While the ease of doing business was a major influence in how the business people viewed the IoM, their view was also influenced by the lifestyle and the environment in the IoM which is further explored in the next section.

4.1.2 Theme 2. The priority of the lifestyle

As discussed earlier in the chapter the business people interviewed expressed very contrasting and ambiguous views about the IoM as a place of business compared to as a place of residence. Thus the second broadly contrasting set of themes generated from the interviews related to the interviewees' perceptions of the IoM- as a place to live and bring up a family.

All of the interviews revealed a number of features of the IoM which contrasted the slow and backward business and social life image with the idyllic green and safe environment; all of which had a great influence in the interviewees' perceptions about the IoM.

Subtheme 2.1. Living in the IoM is a balancing act (between safety and boredom)

This theme encapsulates the fact that for many of the interviewees, the choice to live in the IoM was more of a balancing act between some of the great features of the IoM such as safety, green beautiful landscapes and limitations of a small, remote place.

A great emphasis in the interviews was placed on the quality of the natural environment, however, from a business perspective, as one interviewee acknowledged, trying to attract people and businesses it is important to bear in mind that they need more than a pretty landscape (interviewee 2).

When the interviewees were asked the opening question "what is the IoM for you?" the majority who were born or lived for periods longer than 10 years, called it "home". The Manx Identity came through very strongly from the Manx born interviewees (Interviewee 4, 6, 12,13). To express their loyalty to the country most of the Manx interviewees emphasised the fact that even though some of them left the Island for a few years, studying or working in other places, they came back (interviewee 4,6, 12,13). However interviewees 4 and 6 pointed out that the Manx people on the Island are now a minority, 52% of population is non-Manx born. It was noticeable that people who have relocated and lived in the IoM

for a long time (more than 10 years) expressed similar strong attachment and affinity feelings about the IoM and viewed the IoM as “home” but could not identify themselves with the place (Interviewee 1, 10).

For many respondents the IoM is viewed as an idyllic place, with beautiful pastoral landscapes and full of green spaces. Interestingly, what interviewee (8) pointed out, that the environment is not appreciated enough and not leveraged enough, seemed to resonate with other respondents as well. The interviewee (8) highlighted that the IoM received the UNESCO Biosphere status which reflects a balance between social and ecological systems, and “should drum about it much more”, set an example to other places and increase the investments in this area (interviewee 8).

A common view which appeared frequently, was that people who have relocated see living in the IoM as “living in a bubble”, insulated from many of the problems that the modern society is facing nowadays such as street crime, political backlash etcetera (interviewee 3,5,13,14). In most of the interviews was emphasised the fact that safety is a great feature of the IoM which was so important for most of them, but all of them stressed that it is “undersold” (interviewee 3,5,13,14). This combined with the friendliness of the residents appeared to have struck a chord with many people who have relocated from big cities (5,14). For many of the interviewees these features created the right environment to raise their families.

In contrast with some of the interviewees who have settled in the IoM, some interviewees (2,7,15) expressed vigorously that they were leaving the IoM because the place is very boring and there is nothing to do.

The IoM has few museums, entertainment shows are few and far between, cinema shows are not available all the time; all these make the cultural life fairly dry (interviewee 2, 7, 12). This leaves pubs as the only entertainment place available most of the time, which for some interviewees explains the drinking culture (interviewee 7, 10). However, young people, especially the ones who have grown up in big cities and have relocated recently, do not feel much attracted to pubs, bringing their entertainment life close to nothing and making them see the IoM in a negative light.

Another factor that makes the life of young people pretty boring is the population size. Living in a small place makes it harder to find dates (interviewee 2) even though there is a liberal culture the same as everywhere in the UK, as one of the interviewees (7) put it “it’s a small pond, and there’s not enough fish”. The lack of the events and entertainment venues like clubs makes it harder to meet people and makes them feel quite lonely (interviewee 7,12). For some, the extent of boredom and loneliness has triggered nervous breakdown (interviewee 7).

However, for some others, the lack of entertainment has pushed them to take up sports. Sporting events are very popular in the IoM and have served as a balancing feature for the lack of social life (interviewee 1). Also sporting facilities and clubs have encouraged a sporting culture which is becoming prominent in the life in the IoM (interviewee 12).

While some people view the IoM as the right place and others as the wrong one, many interviewees insist that age is a very important factor influencing perceptions about the IoM because it determines the taste on the activities people enjoy doing.

People with families were not concerned to a great extent with the lack of the night-time entertainment as their lives revolve round family and children (interviewee 3,5,8,10,14). They view the IoM as a good place to raise children because of safety and the fact that there is a wide range of clubs and after school activities that can engage, keep their children entertained and help their development (interviewee 1,2,3,4,12). Interviewee 11 mentioned that the nature and landscape of the IoM was a perfect playground for their children, with beaches, forests, glens.

As the IoM cannot be everything to everyone (interviewee 2,14) for many people is more or less a balancing act between safety, a great place to raise family and entertainment and night life (interviewee 1).

According to interviewee 3, the best way to appreciate what the IoM offers, is going to other big buzz places for a few days which helps to evaluate the pros and cons of both places. However, for this particular interviewee this was the time when the wish to return to the safety of the “IoM bubble” appeared to be quite strong.

Between the extremes of devoted love, adoration for the place and utter discontent, it was also noticeable that in the middle range interviews, the response style was either “I hate this place but I still feel part of it” or “I love this place but I have a lot of things to moan about”.

Subtheme 2.2. Money, morals and moaning

One of the interviewees (10) observed that, having had it good for such a long time, people in the IoM are laid back and show social apathy, which could be seen in the way the public would react for many political issues. Unless things were very bad, people would just moan amongst themselves but never raise their voice. Even though there could be things happening and gossips circulating for all sorts of issues, to the point they would even question who is running this place, or things being swept under the

carpet (interviewee 5), however, as long as the rest of the things ticked along, nobody would make much fuss but just moan (interviewee 10):

“They're mostly just people who have a ton of opinions about a lot of things that they don't really know anything about. And they like to shout and grumble, but they, they won't get off their arse and do anything about it.”

For interviewee 13 the moaning sometimes was exaggerated “Manx mentality, isn't it? Oh, it's very terrible here and moan like ... Really? I just want to introduce you to some places”. For this interviewee people sometimes lost the perspective and, as supported by interviewee 12, the reason being that, for some people “the grass is always greener on the other side” and it's a hard to find a place that has everything; this also explains the variety and the extreme views from different interviewees. For interviewee 13, it is a “small island, it's only 10 miles by 30 miles. There's only so much you can put on a small piece of land really.” However, this constant moaning, even though for interviewee 14 was “low level moan”, appeared not to be helping the way the IoM was viewed especially by people outside the IoM.

Some of the interviewees also appeared very concerned with the type of businesses the government has and is trying to attract. While the gambling sector has provided so many jobs for the IoM residents and has brought over many people, the very essence of those businesses did not seem to resonate with all the interviewees. Getting the Island recognised for supporting gambling and creating an atmosphere where this would be considered as a normal activity, for them is creating a dissonance with values and the environment that they would like to bring up their children and at the same time creates the image of a place of “fur coat and no knickers” (interviewee 10,13). Interviewee 10 brought the example of one of their acquaintances, a teacher who left the teaching profession to work in one of the gambling companies.

“So isn't it strange you get like a mind who is somebody who wants to inspire and educate young minds and help them grow and develop, who gets so turned off that they ... and then they end up just working for money in in the lowest level of ethical dross... compared to one thing which is a really good aspiration to be of service and to help your fellow people, to work in another one which is just about ripping the money out of as many people as you can, with no product, no just trying to feed addiction and get money.”

Even though there might be a financial benefit in attracting those businesses as one interviewee put it, the Island should not be “prostituted for money”, rather try and attract ethical businesses and add to the values of the Manx society rather than deride it (interviewee 10,11,13). Similar concerns were

expressed with regards to some of the funding schemes in certain sectors which had overlooked the ethical side of some of the companies applying for these funds (Interviewee 13).

Subtheme 2.3. The spill-over effect of UK's image

This subtheme was generated from a reoccurring pattern in the responses with regards to the perceptions that the respondents had about the IoM before relocating. While only one of the interviewees relocated in response to an advertisement in one of the major newspapers almost 20 years ago, the rest of the respondents had either relocated for work or family/friendship links with the IoM however, what was in common amongst most of them was the fact that they had no image about the IoM before relocating.

The respondents who relocated for work reasons expressed that the only reason for relocation was the job offer. Their image about the IoM was non-existent and the idea about the place was heavily influenced by a spill-over effect of the UK's image which stemmed from their vague geographical knowledge of whereabouts of the IoM in the world map (interviewee 2, 3, 7). Interviewee 7 described it:

"I didn't know anything about the IoM. I didn't even know it existed. But I'm from a different country. So my geography regarding islands, is knowing islands from my country not smaller islands from other countries, which is the case".

Some of the interviewees had paid a few days visit or had been previously on a holiday before deciding to relocate (interviewee 1,5,8,15). They all highlighted that on those few days of stay, they all liked how the place looked like, and interestingly they all highlighted that the weather was nice during their visit which might have influenced their immediate perception of the IoM as a very nice place to relocate.

Interestingly for some of the respondents (interviewee 3, 9, 10) short work contracts were the introduction to the IoM; one of the interviewees (3) called it "serendipity". They came for few months working in businesses' offices in the IoM, and it was this experience which led to their decision to relocate. While one of the interviewees (14) highlighted that what influenced their image about the IoM were the conversations with family members that had relocated before them.

Despite the fact that most of the relocated interviewees did not have an image about the IoM before relocating, it was evident that the image of the IoM within certain companies, which have branches in the IoM and big cities in the UK, was not positive. Interviewee 2 mentioned that while interviewing staff, recruiting for the company:

“One of the questions I’ve been asked for would be – are you going to make me move to the Isle of Man? – I got that even last week and the answer that I have to give is: No we won’t make you move here but if you want to that’s great, and we help facilitate that. They don’t want to move here”

Interviewee 1 mentioned similar experiences while visiting certain companies’ offices in London. When talking to the staff about the IoM, the comments were: “oh I was there six months, oh I hated it”.

It was evident that for most of the relocated interviewees who did not have a strong image or knowledge about the IoM before relocating, what has influenced their decision were factors other than the image.

Subtheme 2.4. The unfulfilled welcome promise

“There’s a boat in the morning” is an old Manx expression which was used when any visitors to the Island would mock or complain about the way of life or how the IoM used to be. This was a way that Manx residents would say to the visitors that, if they did not like the place for what it was, they could leave; in other words there is a boat in the morning going to the UK. While this expression has remained from times passed, none of the interviewees who have relocated mentioned any issues in their relationships with local Manx people or feeling socially ostracised, rather the opposite (interviewee 3,5). A similar feeling of appreciation of having people moving to the IoM, came from the Manx residents because they saw the assets and the expertise these people brought on the Island as a factor that brought progress and prosperity to the Island (interviewee 6). Furthermore as highlighted by interviewee 4 “the Isle of Man population is now, what, 52% non-Manx born and it's more cosmopolitan than it has ever been”.

Moreover, the government official pointed out that the government is making efforts that people who have relocated feel as part of the community and promote the “the new Manx” identity. However, these efforts appeared ambiguous for two main reasons. First from the interviews came clear the fact that place identity is unique. People’s place identity relates to one country only (interviewee 1, 6, 10) and the interviewees appeared to see the process of identifying themselves with another country as some sort of betrayal of their country of birth.

Secondly, what some of the relocated people (interviewee 5,10,14,15) raised was that while they were being lured to relocate to the IoM, once relocated they were left with a feeling of being unwelcome from the authorities. They viewed the IoM as unwelcoming because, besides the information on tax benefits, the funding schemes and CSPs, there was nothing in place to help them integrate in the life in the IoM; no prior information about housing, healthcare or any services they could access or who to

contact. By contrast, interviewee 3 who relocated more than 10 years ago viewed the system in place as very caring and supportive during the process of settling on the island. However, it appears that the people relocating recently have a different view as interviewee 14 expressed:

“it's really you're on your own. Basically come to the island. Welcome. Thanks. Great we'll receive your taxes. On your own now and that's the way it seems. I don't know whether that's in Britain, a British thing or not, but it's, there's no one when you arrive and you need to, you're working, work permit and stuff that's very much like get a work permit or you're not coming in, as it's in your face. And there's no like oh, welcome. It's like, well do that or you can't be here.”

The very existence of the work permits, which restrict the rights of employment to non-Manx citizens, indicated to them that the focus of the government was in protecting the local job market for the local population (interviewee 1, 5, 14). For the interviewee 15 this was impacting both business and life:

“The work permits department even though we're, we've now had residency work permits, department still insists that we have a work permit. But the work permit is set for intimate visits only. So we have to keep leaving the Island and come back again. It's a crazy situation. And for some reason, they won't change it. So we're very restricted in what we can, how we can actually run the business. So this thing about the island, the freedom to flourish, it does not exist. It's a very nice thing to have a very nice thing for the Island to promote, but once you're here, there's no freedom to flourish.”

This overall situation left them feel as outsiders and stuck. Interviewee 14 called it the “tax trap”, as the only reason for relocating was the taxes, while for interviewee 15 the only reason for not returning to the UK was simply the cost of relocating the business back to the UK.

Interviewee 11 pointed out that government are very good at promoting the Island and get people through the door, but after that, they are just left with no support and having to deal with all sort of life and business issues which reinforce the perception of being unwelcomed. While there was no mention of Manx residents saying the old expression “there's a boat in the morning”, yet the whole situation where they found themselves in relations with the government made some of the people who have relocated to bring it up.

In summary the interviewees recognised the fact that the IoM has the image of a very safe place, with an economy that has grown continuously and maintained a living standard comparable with the UK because the government has kept under control and ensured some hygiene factors, the lack of which

would have created a completely different picture for the IoM (interviewee 10). However, how the government has achieved this part of the image of the IoM, makes up the other part of the image as a laid back, behind the times, tax haven place, with clumsy processes and unqualified workforce. For most of the interviewees the government does not lack the will or efforts to improve the situation, rather lacks the capability in delivering the initiatives it is undertaking (interviewee 8,10).

Despite the difficulties in settling in the IoM and the image that the IoM has, most the interviewees who have relocated over ten years ago and the ones with families (regardless of the length of residence), when asked whether they would leave the IoM, most of them responded “No”, for different reasons though.

4.1.3 Conclusions of interview findings

The aim of the thematic analysis of 15 business people, currently living and working in the IoM, was to analyse and compare the way the image and identity of the IoM is currently viewed and understood by the business people in the IoM because how the IoM is viewed is fundamental in their decision to stay or to leave the IoM. One of the findings to emerge from this analysis was the presence of ambiguity which characterises the perceptions of business people about the IoM. This ambiguity emerged strongly when the business people viewed the IoM from a purely business perspective (with the business hat on) but then considered the IoM from a residential location/family perspective (with the residential/family hat on). What emerged was a sort of Janusian thinking (Rothenberg, 1971) perspective of respondents displaying the “two faces of the IoM” simultaneously.

When the interviewees looked at the IoM from a purely business perspective, interestingly they reported a degree of ambiguity; torn between the strong positive attraction of the low corporate tax regime that has attracted them to locate their business on the IoM, and the genuine animosity felt towards the IoM government and the business infrastructure, it was largely responsible for putting in place (or not). What emerged from the data was a growing sense of frustration and dissatisfaction with the business environment, which was making it hard to start or run their businesses from the IoM.

Likewise when looking at the IoM from a residential/family perspective, the ambiguity was present in many aspects of life. The view of the idyllic scenery and a very safe place appears to contrast the boring place where there is nothing to do; this makes the IoM a great place to raise family but the wrong place for the young people, a place with nice and laid back people but too laid back at work. People ‘moan’ about many things, amongst which the morals and ethics of gambling industry being attracted to the IoM, but they also enjoy the economic benefits these businesses brought to the IoM.

At the pinnacle of this place image is the government that is trying to project the image of the IoM as a “great place to live and work” which gives “the freedom to flourish”, but does not always deliver. The IoM is a safe place with a good living standard because the government has ensured law and order and has always tried to find solutions to maintain a high living standard. Yet, the IoM has the image of a dodgy and backward place because the government has decided to use taxation policies which are not seen favourably by many countries and institutions, or attract businesses which activity is not always seen as ethical by some of the interviewees. These, combined with slow and bureaucratic processes in some government offices, reinforce the backward image.

The fact that the image of the IoM was almost non-existent and what underpinned the decision to relocate were perceptions built on either short visits or the overall image of the UK, made the relocation either the “worst decision”(interviewee 15) or “serendipity” (interviewee 3).

he constant flip of the ‘perceptual lens’ which revealed the strong sense of ambiguity, characterising the emerging perceptions of the IoM and arguably represent something of “Janusian Thinking”(Rothenberg, 1971) found in the responses of interviewees, has been represented as the central link between the two view points in the thematic map (*Figure 10*)

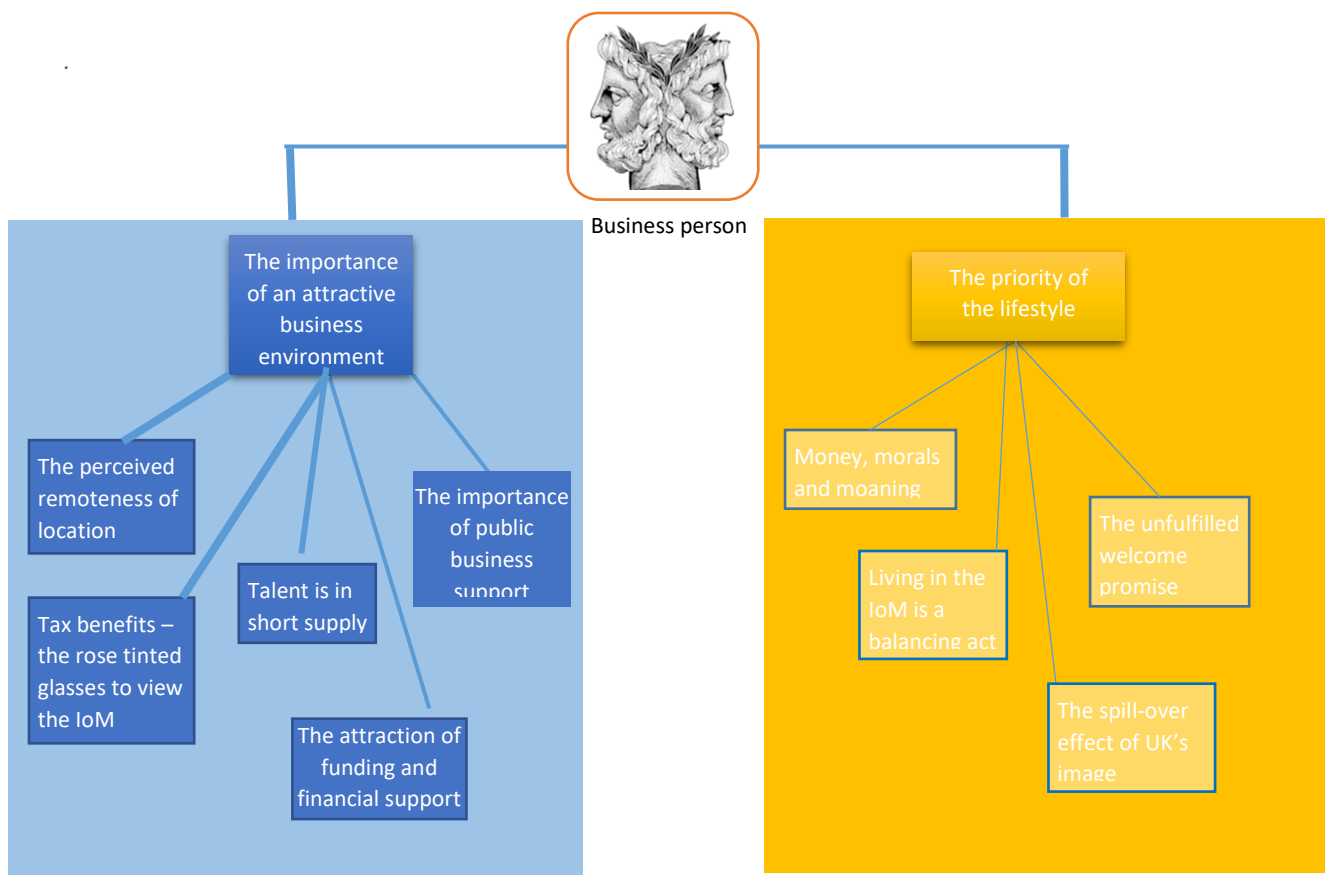


Figure 10 Thematic map of the interview findings.

Janus image: (https://www.netclipart.com/download/iowRooi_mythology-images-t-pngio-janus-two-faced-god)

4.2 Website findings

4.2.1 Introduction

The second aim of the research was to explore how the IoM is portrayed in media, specifically web-based communication by the IoM government. For this reason the web based communications of the Department for Enterprise (DfE), which is responsible for attraction of new businesses and talented workforce, were selected. DfE is structurally organised in 5 agencies, each responsible for a specific area that the government is looking to diversify the economy.

The agencies are:

- Business IoM - responsible for the Island's domestic economy and sectors such as aerospace, precision manufacturing, biomed, food and drink, construction, retail, logistics, medical and care, and private education (Business Isle of Man, 2020b).
- Digital IoM – responsible for the Island's digital economy and establishing the Isle of Man as a centre of international excellence supporting sectors such as eGaming, esports, Fintech, blockchain, IoT, technology, payments, media and film (Digital Isle of Man, 2020b).
- Finance IoM – responsible for Isle of Man's financial and professional services including banking, insurance, fiduciaries, fund and wealth management, and pensions and recognition as an international financial centre of excellence (Finance Isle of Man, 2020b).
- Locate IoM – responsible for highlighting the benefits of living and working in the Isle of Man to people in the UK and further afield (Locate Isle of Man, 2020a).
- Visit IoM – responsible for promoting the IoM as a tourist destination and supporting businesses working in the visitor economy (Visit Isle of Man, 2020).

Each of the agencies has its own website which has a hyperlink in the homepage of the DfE website (shown in Figure 11). All six websites (DfE, Business IoM, Finance IoM, Digital IoM, Locate IoM, Visit IoM) were selected as data sources for this research because while four agencies (Business, Finance, Digital and Locate) are actively engaged in the campaign to attract businesses and workforce, Visit IoM agency's activity is paramount in building the image of the IoM as the first point of contact through tourism and they are all under the DfE umbrella.

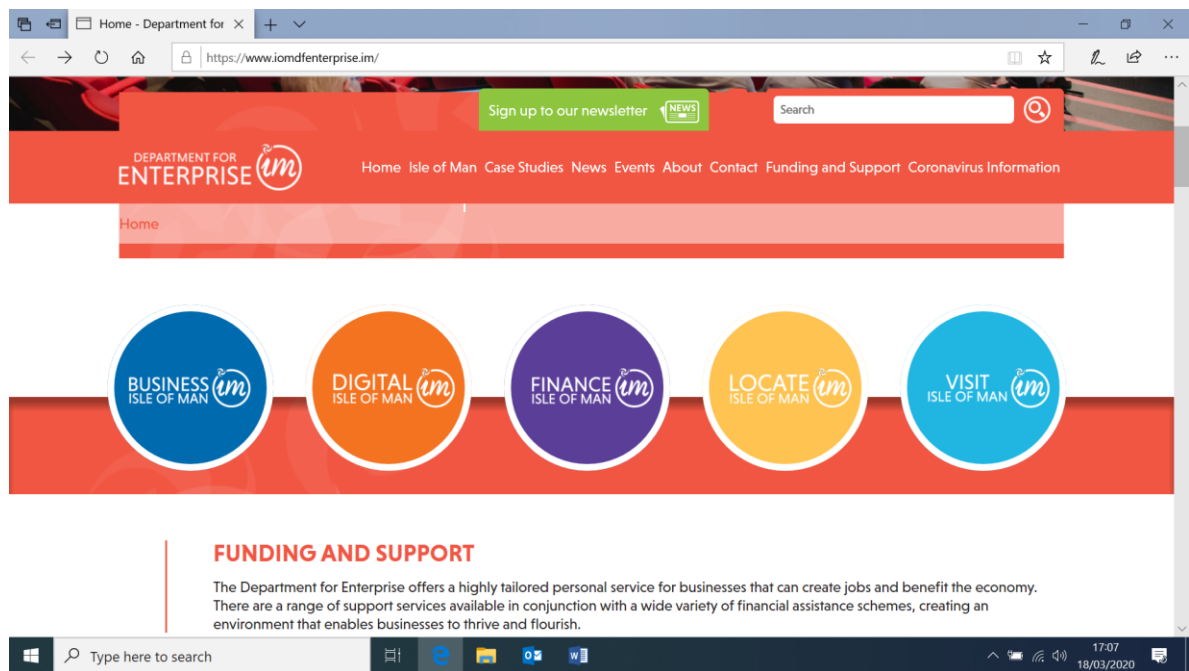


Figure 11 DfE homepage

As highlighted in the methodology chapter, both text and image content of the websites were selected for analysis, leaving out the video content and the external hyperlinks which were considered not to bring any further meaning in this analysis and their role in enhancing the playfulness feature of the website (Ha et al., 1998) was considered out of scope for this research.

The analysis of text and image generated identical main themes and very similar supporting subthemes. The main themes generated were congruent with the IoM government's aim to promote the IoM as a great place to work and live.

IoM- an attractive location for business appears to be one of the dominant thematic message in all the websites (except the Visit IoM) which provides the websites visitors with the business reasons for relocating/starting their business in the IoM. This main theme is supported by a number of contributing subthemes listed below which reflect the ways that the IoM government is delivering the provision of an attractive business environment through:

Subtheme 1.1 The IoM government is very supportive of businesses

Subtheme 1.2 The IoM is a hive of business activity

Subtheme 1.3 Positioning the IoM internationally

Subtheme 1.4 Importance of talented workforce

The IoM's great quality of life with emphasis in the work-life balance appears to be the other dominant thematic message in all six websites which, complementing the first theme, provides the websites visitors with reasons why to relocate as individuals or families to the IoM. This theme is given greater emphasis in the Locate IoM and Visit IoM websites, nevertheless the other websites provide sections with explanations and links to the Locate IoM website. Similar to the first theme, a number of subthemes, listed below, reflect the contributing factors in the quality of life that the IoM has to offer.

Subtheme 2.1 Great health care, good education and a safe environment

Subtheme 2.2 Good living standard and stable economy

Subtheme 2.3 Life is not boring in the IoM

The themes and the subthemes demonstrate the way the IoM government are trying to portray the IoM and highlight what the IoM has to offer to the businesses and individuals wanting to relocate. Each theme and the respective subthemes will be further explored in the next section.

4.2.2 Thematic message 1. IoM- an attractive location for business

This theme is one of the main two themes generated from the analysis of text and image of the six websites of the DfE agencies, reflecting one of the main offers by the IoM government to the businesses and individuals looking to relocate. This theme comprises a number of contributing subthemes which emerged from the way that the websites display, through text and imagery, how the IoM government is delivering the provision of an attractive business environment. The subthemes are discussed further in detail.

Subtheme 1.1. The IoM government is very supportive of businesses

While all the websites are created and controlled by the DfE, it is made clear in each of them the great efforts that the government is making into trying to support the existing businesses in the IoM and attracting more businesses to relocate. Government's support for businesses is made available in the form of setting up regulatory frameworks, financial assistance through grants and funding, taxation policies, guidance and information in relocating and setting up businesses through the Locate team, Chamber of Commerce (CoC) and Business Connex Service, a joint initiative of DfE and CoC (Department for Enterprise, 2020a).



Figure 12 Business Connex Service Manager

By setting up regulatory frameworks and regulatory bodies the IoM government is not only trying to legitimise and facilitate the activity of the business organisations but also ensure the compliance with industry standards and legal requirements. Finance IoM highlights that the IoM has a “Modern and flexible companies legislation”(Finance Isle of Man, 2020a). The regulatory frameworks are set up in close cooperation with experts and private companies, demonstrated by the fact that the three agencies focusing on businesses attraction are “public/private partnership, acting as a key decision maker and advisory body for the economic prosperity of the sector” (Business Isle of Man, 2020b; Digital Isle of Man, 2020b; Finance Isle of Man, 2020b). Examples of these type of activities are the regulatory framework for egaming, blockchain (Digital Isle of Man, 2020e), set up of various registries such as the aircraft registry, shipping registry, games registry and many others (Department for Enterprise, 2020a). A number of news articles in the Digital IoM website announce the licences granted to various egaming and blockchain businesses relocating to the IoM (Digital Isle of Man, 2020e). Similarly in the Business IoM website there are announcements about the creation of Construction Industry Body, Biomed and aerospace clusters (Business Isle of Man, 2020c).

Great emphasis in all the websites is placed upon the financial assistance that the government offers to businesses and the investments in areas like telecoms. In the main DfE website there is a tab on Funding and Support and the main heading in the homepage. All the agencies websites have the Funding and Support tab too, but this just consists of a link to the DfE website.

While the financial assistance schemes cover any type of business, the aim is the creation of employment in the IoM,

“Whether you are an individual looking to take your first steps into self-employment; a business requiring funding to scale-up and grow; or an established organisation looking to

invest and improve in a particular area, the Department has a number of opportunities for creating and developing a business on the Isle of Man” (Department for Enterprise, 2020a).

This is clearly stated in the list of the benefits that businesses have by establishing in the IoM and reinforced by a number of testimonials from already established businesses in the IoM.

As well as creation of employment, governments focus appears to be in raising the standards of the local workforce, by offering financial assistance for training, education and staff development schemes.

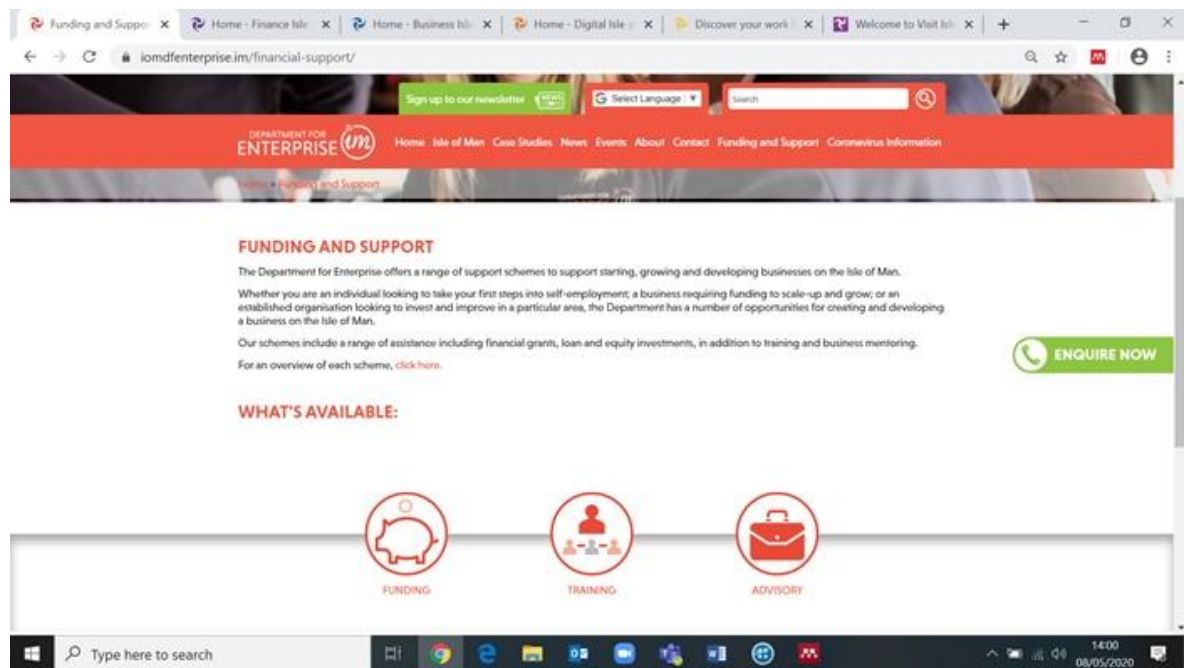


Figure 13 Funding and Support

Much emphasis has been placed upon the Taxation policy which is presented as: “a clear and simple taxation regime giving a broad range of practical advantages to those who operate internationally” (Department for Enterprise, 2020b). A number of taxation benefits are shown in the Finance IoM website for corporates, fund administrations, pensions and they are guided toward the support that they can get in this area from the trust and fiduciary service companies in the IoM (or CSPs - Corporate Service Providers). There are about 200 CSPs in the IoM (Finance Isle of Man, 2020a). Similarly Digital IoM shows the zero corporate tax and the low levels of duty on egaming products (Digital Isle of Man, 2020f). At the same time, Locate IoM website has a comprehensive section on personal tax and National Insurance in the IoM including a tax calculator and comparisons with the UK and Ireland (Locate Isle of Man, 2020g). This also includes the incentives in tax and NI breaks for the individuals relocating to the IoM.

Another area in which government is demonstrating their support for the businesses and individuals relocating is guidance and information. Locate IoM has extensive information on immigration, visas, work permits (Locate Isle of Man, 2020f). Besides the benefits of relocating the website has a job search page and a list of jobs in demand in the IoM.

This subtheme emerged also from a number of images which appear to have been selected with the view to reinforce the core message themes that run through the websites' text. Government staff with shirts bearing logos of their respective agencies talking to individuals emphasized the advice, help and support the government is providing to businesses and individuals. Close up, frontal portraits of the heads of agencies looking at the viewers in blogs and news articles, images of political figures in the IoM shaking hands convey the message that the government are approachable, open and welcoming to the businesses.



Figure 14 Chief Minister with the Head of CWEIC (Commonwealth Enterprise and investment Council)



Figure 15 DfE staff with businessman

Subtheme 1.2. The IoM is a hive of business activity

This subtheme came about by the number of events and reports in the news sections in the websites. Digital IoM website particularly has a number of events and reports on events such as conferences and fairs, on and off the Island (Digital Isle of Man, 2020e).



Figure 16 International Fair



Figure 17 International Fair

A number of blogs highlight the efforts being made to normalise gambling, by placing the focus on actions undertaken to keep the crime out of egaming, raising governance standards and educating businesses about the overall concept of egaming (T. Jones, 2020). Similarly Business and Finance IoM websites also have a number of blogs and reports on summits and conferences and workshops (Business Isle of Man, 2020c). The news sections frequently have articles and blogs on the latest

developments in the particular industries and at the same time showcasing the investments and improvements happening in the IoM in technology areas demonstrating that the IoM is progressing as fast as other places.

Announcements on appointments in different businesses show the movement of people in between them and the new talent joining companies (Finance Isle of Man, 2020b), highlighting the opportunities for career progress in the IoM. Even though there are calls for businesses to offer placements for STEP students, the only places shown to have offered this opportunity are the government departments.

In terms of images this subtheme was generated by a number of images from conferences, expos in the IoM or other international events, workshops, forums and summits taking place in the IoM or in other places where the IoM government or companies from the IoM have taken part. Images also shown STEP students in government departments. Appointments of talent in different businesses were accompanied by the pictures of the individuals. Some of the blogs/articles in digital had standard graphic images of technology.



Figure 18 International Fair



Figure 19 BIOMED Conference



Figure 20 Chief Minister and DfE Minister in conference

Subtheme 1.3. Positioning the IoM internationally

This subtheme encapsulates the achievements of the IoM in the international arena in various business areas and how well known the IoM is. Business IoM highlights the fact that the IoM is the only entire country to have gained the UNESCO Biosphere status which demonstrates the commitment of the IoM government in environmental protection and climate change action (Business Isle of Man, 2020a).



Figure 21 IoM at UNESCO BIOSPHERE Conference

Government's commitment is also reflected in the membership in Cambridge Cleantech, a "network organisation supporting the growth of sustainable, 'clean technology' companies in the United Kingdom" (Cambridge Cleantech, 2020) and support for businesses in the clean technology area. This subtheme came through images of the logo of the Cambridge Cleantech and a staged image of a beach in the IoM.

The place of the IoM in the international arena had great emphasis in the Finance IoM website, where was pointed out that the international finance sector in the IoM, which includes banking, fund investment, insurance and pensions, not only employs several thousand people in a number of international banking, insurance and fund administration groups, but also manages billions of pounds in funds and deposits of people and corporates round the world. The high quality of services provided from the IoM Finance sector was shown by the news article on the recognition of excellence awarded to IoM at International Product and Service Award and International Investment Awards (Finance Isle of Man, 2020c).



Figure 22 International Awards

In addition the international connections and recognition in the technology area were highlighted through various news about the multinational egaming businesses located in the IoM and participation and links with various international organisations which operate in the AI and blockchain sector. Digital IoM points at the first testing environment (sandbox) for blockchain offered by the IoM government (Digital Isle of Man, 2020a).

Another highlight is the “world class Telecoms, power infrastructure and datacentres in the IoM” (Digital Isle of Man, 2020c). News articles point at the quality of Telecomms being enhanced by the latest investment of both the government and Manx Telecom into fibre optics technology, which will be laid down all around the IoM (Digital Isle of Man, 2020d). Locate IoM website makes the point that “while the Isle of Man may be sat in the middle of the Irish Sea, it does not suffer from being out of the loop!” (Locate Isle of Man, 2020m).

Another important factor highlighted is the physical connectivity of the IoM with the rest of the UK through about 200 flights per week to different cities in the UK and the ferry service. Locate IoM shows the length of flights and sailings for all the UK cities that IoM is connected through sea and air.

Overall this subtheme generated from the text content, did not appear as strong in the images. Most of the text reflecting the international recognition was accompanied by standard office images, with young members of staff mostly in suits, images of Athol Street (a street with only offices in Douglas, IoM) or bank buildings images, which mostly create the perception of a business/financial centre. People in those images are blurred showing movement, speed which conveys the message of busy, active environment.



Figure 23 Athol Street, Douglas IoM

The images of airplanes, ferries and graphics showing telecommunications appeared to simply break the text in chunks and add to the playfulness of the page rather than convey a message. The images from the international conferences and fairs were the ones that contributed in the generation of this subtheme, by showing the IoM government stand next to well-known technology brands stands, demonstrating the place of the IoM in the international arena.

Subtheme 1.4. Importance of the talented workforce

This subtheme was generated by the emphasis placed on the number of high calibre professionals, who run their own businesses or work in various companies on the island. A number of articles and blogs showcase the range of talent that is already in the IoM in areas like IT, engineering, media, biomed and more. Also a number of highly qualified people have already relocated to the IoM and Locate IoM has listed testimonials, videos and articles about these people (Locate Isle of Man, 2020I).

The websites highlight the fact that the IoM government offers great support through various funding schemes in education, training, apprenticeship and STEP programmes to businesses so they can continue their staff development and allow young people to gain experience (Locate Isle of Man, 2020b).



Figure 24 Minister for Enterprise and STEP student

The websites also make the point that the IoM has a high number of vacancies in jobs that require highly skilled professionals, which is also the reason for a number of events like the Graduate Fair and incentive schemes being put in place to try and entice Manx students, who have gone to study in the UK, to return back on the island. In addition Locate IoM offers a page with contacts to Employment Agencies which could assist anybody wishing to relocate to find a job in certain sectors.



Figure 25 Graduate Fair

This subtheme was generated by the images of business owners, talented people who have relocated, students going through STEP programme, graduate fairs. Some of the images are close up portraits of the people who relocated, smiling and looking at the viewer conveying messages that support the text and reflect the fact that they are happy to be on the IoM because their careers and businesses are flourishing. Images from the graduate fairs show young people in front of stands in the fairs, talking to business people manning the stands. The message coming from these images shows how keen government are to attract young people through job opportunities in the IoM.



Figure 26 Pippa Lovell relocated from Denmark



Figure 27 Dr. Roger W. Smith OBE based in the IoM

4.2.3 Thematic message 2. The IoM's great quality of life

This theme was generated by a number of features which convey the message that the IoM is a place that offers the opportunity to live a great quality life and have a good work-life balance. Locate IoM agency appears to have in its focus the promotion of the life in the IoM, however, the other agencies provide the links to this website and also highlight the benefits for business people to relocate with families to the IoM. This is reflected by a number of images with the family theme as the one below.



Figure 28 Calf of Man Island view from the IoM

In the website Locate IoM a prominent place is given to the HSBC annual survey which ranked “the Isle of Man as the best place to live for expats in the British Isles, and 12th best in the world”. Locate IoM portrays the life in the IoM as “living the dream” by placing the focus in the “perfect work life balance” (Locate Isle of Man, 2020a). While the work part presents the IOM as “a leading international business centre renowned for its innovation, professionalism and positive international engagement”, this is balanced by a life where people “embrace laid-back Island living” (Locate Isle of Man, 2020a). While the page provides extensive information about the business environment in the IoM it also offers tips on how to maintain work life balance. A number of features that would be seen to consist a great quality of life are explored further through the subthemes below.

Subtheme 2.1. Great health care, good education and safe environment

This subtheme reflects the fact that the IoM government considers healthcare, education and safety as very important features which contribute to a great quality of life for individuals and families. Therefore Locate IoM displays information about the IoM having its own NHS which offers free healthcare, private health care, a modern hospital and a number of other health related facilities and services. The website reinforces the fact that health agreements with the UK allow for patients from the IoM to be transferred to the UK and also free emergency treatments for IoM residents when travelling to the UK (Locate Isle of Man, 2020e).

In the Locate IoM, the IoM education system is considered as “well-regarded” with a number of privately run pre-schools and nurseries, state run primary and secondary schools, a public school and a higher education provider, the University College IoM which delivers several programmes in partnership with the University of Chester in the UK (Locate Isle of Man, 2020c). Government’s support to education is not only highlighted by the quality of the schools but also the financial support to the students towards their university fees and various maintenance grants.

In terms of safety, Locate IoM boasts that, according to the Chief Constable the IoM “remains the safest place in the British Isles” with “the lowest level of crime compared to the safest counties in the UK and one-third of the UK level overall” (Locate Isle of Man, 2020h).

This subtheme was present only through the odd standard images from healthcare environment, school laboratory environment and an IoM landscape image which in themselves are not very representative, nor do they convey any special message beyond the fact of mere illustration and breaking down the text to add to the playfulness of the page.



Figure 29 Hospital



Figure 30 Classroom

Subtheme 2.2. Good living standard and stable economy

This subtheme encapsulates a number of features that demonstrate the living standards in the IoM. All five the websites make sure to highlight the fact that the IoM economy has continually grown for decades with a 50 years of budget surplus (Finance Isle of Man, 2020d). This allows the government to provide the financial support required for businesses and ensure the living standards of the local residents. The support for local residents is demonstrated by the increase of the minimum wage at a level comparative or better than the UK and the fact that the average wage in the IoM is 14% higher than the UK. The high number of job vacancies, while might be a negative feature for businesses,

demonstrates very low levels of unemployment and the opportunities for well paid jobs for the local residents.

The image that represented this subtheme was a map of the British Isles with numbers that show satisfaction level and the comparison of average wage. The figures presented in the image with big fonts make it clear instantly what the page text content is about and add to the ease of understanding and pulling the reader to read through the text.



Figure 31 Screenshot from Locate IoM

Subtheme 2.3. Life is not boring in the IoM

Features that demonstrate that life outside work in the IoM is far from boring, were the basis that generated this subtheme. Locate IoM provides comprehensive information about numerous clubs and events of a wide range of sporting activities are spread all around the Island (Locate Isle of Man, 2020d). These clubs are available to children and adults of any range of abilities.

The Locate IoM and Visit IoM place emphasis on a range of international scale events which take place regularly in the IoM, such as TT (Tourist Trophy) motorbike racing, various cycling events and

race walking competitions. The indoor activities are made possible through four swimming pools, the National Sports Centre and a number of civic centres.

At the same time the landscape and natural environment in the IoM, through beaches, glens, hills and forests offers opportunities for a great number of outdoors sports and events.



Figure 32 Kayaking in the IoM



Figure 33 Yoga in the glens

IoM heritage is well preserved and castles and museums are open to the public and often organise events. Locate IoM describes “the arts and cultural scene is quite extensive” with a number of community clubs and societies (Locate Isle of Man, 2020k). A lifestyle blog in the Locate IoM website, parts of which are written by relocated bloggers, provides an extensive list of things to do in the IoM amongst which a foodies guide through restaurants and dining places showcasing the quality of food and service (Locate Isle of Man, 2020j). With regards to food, the IoM Food and Drink festival has

become an important event which showcases the great quality of local produce and attracts over ten thousand visitors each year.

An important part of this subtheme were the 28 relocation stories which with pictures, videos and individuals testimonials, highlight the benefits of relocation and the experience of these people.

This subtheme dominated the images in the Locate IoM, Visit IoM and the DFE websites. It reflected a number of outdoor activities like family outings, team and individual sports, numerous IoM landscapes and heritage sites, pictures of food and restaurants. The context or background of these images consisted of sunset, fuzzy green, blue sky or clear starry night sky with very occasional cloud, despite the fact that as highlighted on the Locate IoM website “Islanders love to moan about the weather” (Locate Isle of Man, 2020i). People in the images are smiling and conveying the message of having a nice time.



Figure 34 Image in Locate IoM



Figure 35 At the beach

4.2.4 Conclusions of website findings

Overall all six websites present the IoM as the ideal place to live and work, by highlighting all benefits of conducting business from the IoM and showcasing the quality of life in the IoM. All these positive aspects are underpinned by the relentless work of the IoM government to incentivise and facilitate the relocation process for businesses and individuals through a number of financial benefits, updating of legal and regulatory frameworks and guidance on processes to make business transition to IoM seamless. The themes and subthemes were generated from both text and image content and they are all congruent in delivering the message which presents the IoM as the perfect place for work-life balance.

Bringing together the themes and the subthemes of this section, the thematic map below (Figure 36) reflect the findings from the websites. The blue ellipse represents the main business theme – The IoM – an attractive location for business; the amber ellipse represents residential life theme – The IoM’s great quality of life. The contributing subthemes are shown within each ellipse.

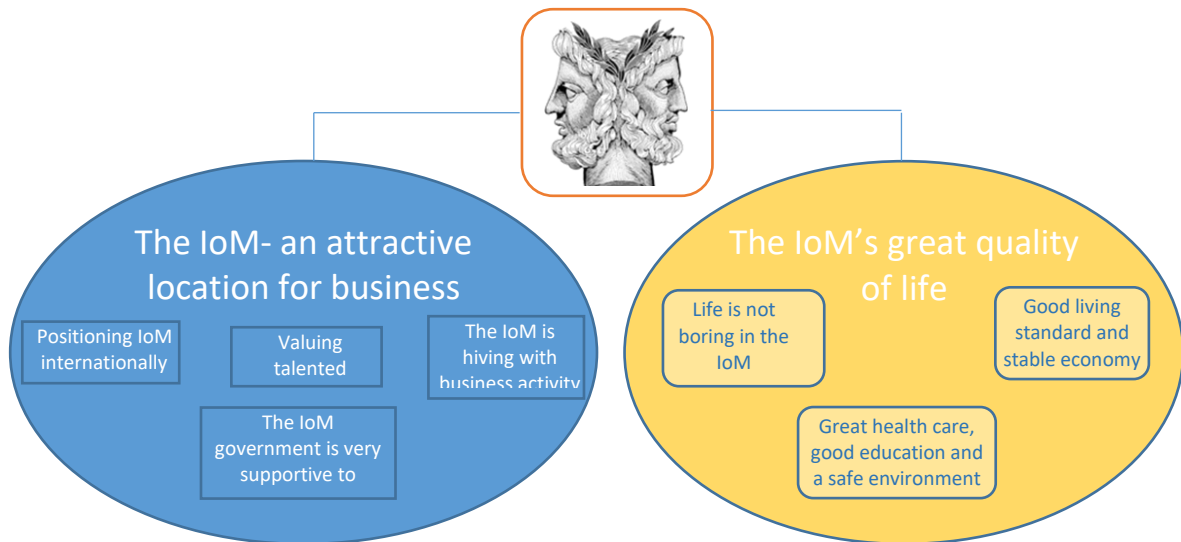


Figure 36 Websites findings thematic map

4.3 Comparing and contrasting the way which the IoM is portrayed through government web based communications with the perceptions of the IoM held by the business people in the IoM

The previous sections addressed the first and the second objectives of this research through examining and analysing the way that the IoM is portrayed by the IoM government website and the perceptions of the research participants about the IoM. The outcome of the analysis process were a number of themes and subthemes which, in the case of the websites contents reflect the aims of the IoM government to promote the IoM as “a great place to work and live”. Interestingly, switching the point of view between work and life in the IoM was a dominant feature of the interviews, reflecting a sense of ambiguity, similarly to Janusian thinking (Rothenberg, 1971), and highlighting that both areas are equally important for the respondents. Therefore comparing and contrasting of the findings, which fulfils the third objective of this research, will entail firstly comparing and contrasting respondents’ perceptions with the website messages about the business environment, and further on the residential environment.

4.3.1 Comparing and contrasting the findings about Business Environment

This section compares and contrasts thematic messages emerging from the government websites with the opinions of the research participants about the business environment in the IoM. In seeking to analyse the way that the IoM is portrayed and perceived (albeit from a small sample of 15 business people), it may be useful to first establish the essential characteristics of the IoM that the

government are seeking to convey / communicate through the web and whether these characteristics are a genuine reflection of what the research participants believe and feel.

From the analysis, it was clear that the way the IoM business environment was presented in the websites reflected an aspirational view of the IoM government, while the interviews reflected the lived experiences of the research participants. From the findings, it was evident that both the IoM government and the business people agree on the importance of an attractive business environment; the first main theme generated from both datasets. However, what this environment actually is in the IoM presented a point of departure and important insights were revealed by contrasting the image projected through the website and the perceptions of the business people. The subthemes under this main theme in the two datasets differed slightly however, this slight difference simply highlighted the different importance that each group behind data sets gives to different facets of the business environment in the IoM. Therefore the comparison between the subthemes and themes is organised in the business areas that the subthemes relate to.

Business- government cooperation

The restructuring of the DfE and creation of the five agencies represents the commitment of the IoM government in their initiative to diversify the economy and try to attract businesses and talented workforce. Creation of the agencies as private-public bodies, with boards composed of both government officials and business people in the IoM demonstrates the will of the IoM government to find and implement policies/solutions that would assist businesses as expected by the businesses, which conveys the message that businesses play a very important role in shaping the policies and initiatives undertaken by the government.

However, a number of respondents highlighted that government only pays lip service to businesses, which clearly reflects that what is portrayed in the websites does not fully align with the people's perceptions. The respondents' frustration while discussing this issue was a clear sign of their dissatisfaction.

Financial support - Tax benefits and funding

The agencies' websites display an active business environment which includes a very supportive government in terms of funding and financial benefits such as taxation benefits. Indeed taxation benefits presented the most important attraction for businesses as highlighted by almost every single respondent in the interviews. Despite some issues, such as the size or stage of business, moral

principles etcetera, all the respondents considered taxation regime as highly beneficial and how the taxation is presented in the website is in full agreement with respondents' perceptions.

In terms of funding and grants, the big businesses found the funding schemes very beneficial and easy to deal with. However, not all the small businesses and start-ups found funding schemes beneficial. The schemes appeared very restricted and available only for certain types of businesses. Despite the prominence in the DfE website, funding for the start-ups, being that private funding or public funding, appeared to be an issue and it seems the IoM is yet to find a wider, perhaps all-encompassing solution, because what is in place, is supporting only certain businesses. If the aim of the government is to support only particular types of businesses then perhaps a more specific audience should be targeted, rather than enticing everyone but supporting only few.

Business support services

With regards to other support offered by the government, the website through both text and image try to portray a very supporting government, whose staff are always there to assist and help every business. According to the interviewees, the Locate team appeared to be very welcoming to businesses and individual people relocating, by offering not only comprehensive information on the website, but also meeting with business people and bringing together people from different areas of the government in the initial meetings. However, the first impression of a very supportive environment soon disappeared. Many business people relied on the help from their networks to navigate the system in terms of business registrations and forms. The processes and systems within government were found to be antiquated and far from the digital image that the websites try to convey. Same processes which take a couple of hours in the UK take months in the IoM. The refrain "The IoM is who you know not what you know" was present in most interviews. Interestingly, research by Mackrell (2013) brought out very similar issues which clearly demonstrate that in respect of business dealings or navigating the government systems and processes little has changed over the years. The analysis shows not only misalignment between the website messages and respondents' perceptions, but also a great sense of frustration and dissatisfaction with the processes.

Relationship with Corporate Service Providers (CSP's)

The creation of the Business Connex Service, as a cooperation between DfE and the Chamber of Commerce, with the aim to guide and assist businesses to start their activity in the IoM, was well featured in some of the websites. While in principle a good idea, from the respondents' perspective appeared to be nothing but a rerouting service to the CSPs. From the findings it is clear that, while

CSPs might be offering important services to businesses, many start-ups find them extremely expensive and the whole cooperation between CSPs and the government as exploitative. As one of the respondents put into context “for the same service, a company was quoted £5,000 in Liverpool, and £50,000 in the IoM”. Therefore what is presented in the websites and what the respondents’ perceptions are about the CSPs and their cooperation with the IoM government appears to be in a complete contradiction and a source of extreme frustration.

Talent shortage

The image of a thriving business environment with international conferences and fairs appeared to have an important place in the websites. However, despite the number or size of these events, the size of the business environment in the IoM is small and lacks the opportunities for career progression for the talent employed in these businesses. In similar but bigger environments career progression would be facilitated through moving from one company to the other. This situation could help in explaining the lack of talented workforce which presented an area where the concerns of the businesses seem to coalesce with the government’s priority.

The disagreement in terms of workforce appeared only when discussing the local workforce. While the websites highlight the quality of talent already in the IoM and various support schemes for apprenticeships and training, many of the relocated respondents consider local workforce as lazy and unqualified. Furthermore, as highlighted by one interviewee, very few businesses are prepared to invest in their staff, exacerbating the issue.

Both the shortage and the quality of the workforce have been a persisting issue in the IoM, which is consistent with Mackrell's (2013) findings, despite the fact that the IoM government has put in place several funding schemes for education and training. However, the extremely low levels of unemployment in the IoM demonstrate the shortage of workforce despite the quality of locals. At the same time the display of the updated list of the jobs available in the IoM, in the Locate IoM website is in full agreement with the respondents perceptions that the IoM needs more talented workers to fill in the vacancies.

Infrastructure services

The positioning of the IoM internationally in terms of the great level of connectivity with the rest of the world both technologically and physically appeared to be in complete disagreement between what is presented in the website and how the respondents view the IoM.

The websites highlight that telecommunication has been placed high in government's agenda, as to trigger the generation of a national strategy approved by the parliament, which in turn has provided significant investment in the telecoms infrastructure, even though the telecoms are privately owned businesses. The whole telecoms strategy reflects the efforts that the government is making to solve the telecommunications, viewed by many respondents as outdated and as deterrent for many businesses looking to relocate, both from the quality and price perspective. Therefore with regards to the telecoms, despite disagreements about what is actually in place, the government is working on addressing the issue.

Physical connectivity of the IoM with the UK was another important factor highlighted in the findings. The websites highlight that, despite the fact that the IoM is an island, it is very well connected with the rest of the UK and the world through over 200 flights weekly from the IoM to UK and the regular ferry services. However, most of the respondents expressed concern with the prices of these services. Mackrell (2013) also reported a similar finding in her study in the IoM in 2013. It is obvious that what makes a place remote is not geographical distance from centres of interest rather the capability to cross that distance whenever one wants, demonstrating that the website messages and respondents' perceptions are not aligned.

Banking and finance sector boast a number of awards and international recognition for its quality of services in the Finance IoM website, yet their interface with the start-ups and the relocated businesses in the IoM was a source of frustration for most of the respondents, presenting another discordance between what is presented in the websites and what business people experience in their day to day operations.

Despite the fact that the website describes some of the legislation in the IoM related to business as modern, some of the respondents found it to be quite old and written in an incomprehensible language to demand the use of a lawyer even for very small issues. As well as the old legislation, the absurdity faced when dealing with the Manx legal system was described as "Kafka meets Alice in Wonderland"; a complete contradiction with how the legal system is described in the website.

Overall the infrastructure issues appeared to be source of frustration and dissatisfaction for the running of the businesses from the IoM and combined with the lack of support from the government reinforced the perception of the IoM being remote and behind the times.

4.3.2 Comparing and contrasting the Residential Environment

The contributing factors to the quality of the living environment, in the form of the subthemes generated from the interviews and the website content, will be compared and contrasted in this section. Important to note that some of the subthemes were similar in both datasets, yet, a few of them that came through the interviews were not present in the website content.

Nature and safety

The Locate IoM website portrays the life in the IoM as “living the dream” (Locate Isle of Man, 2020a), as the IoM offers the opportunity to have a great quality of life by maintaining a work-life balance; a claim supported by the results of the HSBC expats survey. More importantly, the great quality of life in the IoM in many aspects was supported by most of the research participants and reflected congruence between the two datasets.

Both the website findings and the interview findings were congruent with regards to the IoM natural beauty and the quality of the natural environment. Even though the websites boast the fact that IoM is the only whole country to have the UNESCO biosphere status, one of the interviewees (8) expressed that “the IoM should drum even more about it”.

Another characteristic highlighted by the website is the fact that the IoM is the safest place in Britain with nearly 1/3 of the crime level of the safer counties in the UK. The perceptions of all the interviewees fully concurred with the website with regards to the safety in the IoM, and as expressed by most of them this feature of the IoM is undersold.

Good living standard, healthcare and education

Another feature where the findings from the websites appear to be consistent with the findings from the interviews is stable economy and the good living standard in the IoM. While the websites boast the continuous growth of the Manx economy and the increases in minimum wage, despite the fact that the interviewees agree with the fact and enjoy it, at the same time they blamed the good living standard for the laid back nature of the local residents, especially in the work environment.

In terms of health care and education, the Locate IoM website highlight that IoM has its NHS and a good standard of both healthcare and education. The Interviewees did not mention the healthcare in particular, however, with regards to education, while most of the respondents’ perceptions concurred with the website, for one of the respondents, education in the IoM was treated by the

government as an “afterthought” and children in state schools were not encouraged to strive for their best.

Leisure and entertainment

In terms of leisure and entertainment, the Locate IoM website lists a number of local events and clubs for both children and adults that take place in the IoM. While most of the interviewees concurred with the leisure activities in terms of outdoors sports, for the ones who were not keen on sports, the IoM is a very boring place, where there’s nothing to do. Especially for young people, both local and the relocated ones, the small number of recreational amenities and the small size of the population makes the life so boring, that many of the local youngsters who go to study in the UK do not come back, whereas the relocated ones do not want to stay. This finding supports Whisler, Waldorf, Mulligan and Plane (2008) and Florida’s (2002) research which concluded that young childless people do not like to stay in places with low density population and poor recreational and art amenities. However, congruent with Whisler et al. (2008) research, low density population and lack of indoor recreational amenities, did not appear a big issue to the people with families as for them what mattered most was the fact that the natural environment and the numerous children out of school activities created an ideal environment to bring up their children. It appears that the alignment between website messages and respondents’ perceptions for features such as leisure and entertainment is dependent on the age of the respondent. While this feature appeared to satisfy the respondents with families, it was clearly highly dissatisfying for the young and childless respondents.

Welcome promise

The relocated respondents found the local residents very friendly and enjoyed the community spirit, which concurs with Mellander et al. (2011) findings on the importance of the community satisfaction in the decision to stay. Yet, despite the friendly and welcoming residents, some of the relocated respondents in the last 10 years, viewed the IoM as unwelcoming because of some of the entry barriers they faced during the settling process, such as the work permits and the associated restrictions, lack of information on practical issues: for example registering at the doctors, housing information or entering house first buyers’ schemes and more. Florida (2002) insists that lowering the entry barriers is paramount in attracting talented workforce. Even though some of the restrictions in work permits have been adjusted for some professions (as confirmed by the Government official) there are still other restrictions in place which have an impact in day to day activities of some of the respondents, causing irritation and dissatisfaction. Yet the websites, especially Locate IoM paints a different picture, where businesses and talented people are welcome

and supported through different scheme, including financial incentives. The barriers to entry presented another discordance between respondents' perceptions and the websites.

Money, morals and moaning

One of the subthemes that emerged from the interviews, "Money, morals and moaning" concerned the ethical issues related to some of the businesses that the IoM government is attracting and how people in the IoM perceive them. While Digital IoM is boasting the attraction of egaming businesses and all the efforts of the government in establishing laws, regulations and frameworks to support these businesses, a few of the interviewees viewed these developments with concern, as they question the ethical values of the gambling phenomenon as such and the companies associated with it. While they appreciated the positive impact that egaming has had on the island's economy in terms of highly paid jobs, for them, raising their children in an environment where gambling is seen as positive feature, presented a contradiction with their ethical and moral values. Furthermore, for them it would not benefit the reputation of the IoM. However, for most of the interviewees, getting the Island known as an egaming centre, did not present any concern rather they appreciated the money this industry is bringing to the economy. The only respondents who considered the ethical and moral issues were the highest educated, which concurs with Scocchia et al. (2014) conclusion that learning through life has an important impact on people's perceptions.

The ethical and moral issues of the business activities in the IoM do not influence the alignment between perceptions of the respondents and the website messages, because what is shown in the websites is clearly what happens in the IoM and most of the respondents agree with. Rather, this might potentially be an indicator on how some of the ethical and moral values of the IoM society are being shaped.

What came through the interviews was also the fact that despite disagreeing with some of the things that the government does or how some things are in the IoM, people are so indifferent to the situation, that they would only be negative informally, but not actually take any action to make a change. For one interviewee "as long as things are ticking along, why bother". The laid back nature of residents was featured in the website but for different reasons, namely to highlight the quality of a slow paced life, and in that respect, at surface level, what is shown in the websites matches the respondents' perceptions.

The image of the IoM

The aim of the websites which portray the IoM as a great place to work and live and the great lengths to position the IoM internationally, is ultimately to create a positive image of the Island to the outside world. Previous research (Canavan, 2013, 2014, 2015a; Steering Committee et al., 2006) has concluded that the IoM image was almost non-existent, or even where it barely existed it was not positive. Findings from the interviews were very similar. The image of the IoM amongst the young members of staff of some of the companies in the UK was very negative, while most of the relocated people did not know anything or knew very little about the IoM before relocating. Their idea about the IoM was restricted to the fact that it is a place somewhere in the UK, and it was the overall image of the UK which influenced their decision to relocate rather than specifically the IoM, even though some of them visited the Island for a few days before taking a decision. Only two of the respondents had experienced the Island with short contracts before deciding to relocate. This comes to suggest that perceptions of most of the relocated respondents about the IoM were not created or influenced by previous information or image, rather the lived experiences in the IoM.

After comparing each of the characteristics in isolation, in order to get a better/complete picture of the current business and residential environment in the IoM from both standpoints (respondents and government), a relatively crude comparison, which attempts to juxtapose the various features of the findings, is presented below in the Table 9 for business environment, and Table 10 for the residential environment.

Comparing perceptions and brand messages for Business Environment

Perceptions about the IoM's Business Environment	Website's messages about the IoM's Business Environment		
"The importance of an attractive business environment"	"IoM- an attractive location for business"		
Taxation benefits	Taxation benefits	Alignment	
Haphazard Funding	Access to funding and financial support		Misalignment
Little government support	Great government support		Misalignment
CSPs exploit businesses	CSPs help businesses		Misalignment
Antiquated legal system	Modern legislation and regulatory frameworks		Misalignment
Outdated infrastructure (banking, postal, telecoms)	Great infrastructure		Misalignment
Expensive access to/from the IoM	Frequent flight/ferry services to/from the IoM		Misalignment
Shortage of talent	Shortage of talent	Alignment	
No career opportunities	Career opportunities		Misalignment

Table 9. Comparing respondents' perceptions with the website messages about IoM's Business Environment

Comparing perceptions and brand messages for Residential Environment

Respondents' perceptions on IoM's Residential environment	Website messages about the IoM Residential Environment		
"The importance of a great living environment"	"The IoM's great quality of life"	Alignment	
Great natural environment	Great natural environment	Alignment	
Safety	Safest place in the UK	Alignment	
Stable economy and good living standard	Stable economy and good living standard	Alignment	
Health and Education	Great health and Education	Alignment	
Outdoors sports	Outdoors sports	Alignment	
Great Community	Great Community	Alignment	
Being unwelcome	Being welcome		Misalignment
Boring place	Variety of entertainment	Alignment	Misalignment
Money morals moaning	Normalising gambling	Alignment	Misalignment
Image is non-existent	Aiming to build the image		Misalignment

Table 10 Comparing respondent's perceptions with website messages about IoM's Residential Environment

The terminology used for comparison in both tables does not imply any quantitative measures, because this is qualitative research where perceptions and messages are juxtaposed in order to highlight the existence of areas of contradiction or agreement. Where respondents' perceptions were in broad agreement with what is presented in the website, for the purpose of this analysis the term used was: Alignment. For example, there is "Alignment" on the Taxation issue; this reflects that the messages from the website broadly correspond with respondents' perceptions as illustrated in Table 13 (Appendix 7). Where respondents' perceptions contradicted/disagreed with how characteristics were presented in the website, those characteristics or the way they were described,

were classified as being: Misaligned. Examples of how perceptions/ descriptions of the ease of access to/from the IoM were misaligned are illustrated in Table 14 (Appendix 8).

From Table 9 it is clear that with regards to the business environment there are very few points of congruence between respondents' perceptions and the website messages. Comparing how the IoM is presented in the IoM government's websites and how people perceive the IoM as a place of residence Table 10, there was alignment for most of the features/characteristics of the residential environment. For two of the characteristics there was disagreement amongst the respondents' perceptions. Their perceptions differed based on age and level of education.

Besides the alignment and misalignment between the respondent's perceptions and the websites, a very important issue to emerge from analysis was that all the misaligned features coincided to feelings of dissatisfaction, frustration and irritation for the respondents. This does not imply that should the websites have shown all the characteristics of the IoM as they are, good or bad, this would have been a source of the respondents' satisfaction. Therefore it cannot be implied that there is a causal relationship between misalignment and dissatisfaction, in other words respondents did not feel dissatisfied, frustrated because the messages in the websites did not reflect what they felt, rather because these characteristics of the environment were impacting the way they were running their businesses or living their lives. The misalignment simply exacerbated the feelings of dissatisfaction.

On the other hand, what created satisfaction for the respondents was the existence of the positive, good features/characteristics of the IoM, despite how they were portrayed in the websites. So it is clear that the satisfaction and dissatisfaction came from the existence or the absence of certain features or characteristics of the place. What the websites did, was simply they enhanced or exacerbated the satisfaction/dissatisfaction. It was evident from the interviews that most of the issues that caused dissatisfaction to relocated people, caused the same dissatisfaction to the local residents.

4.4 Conclusions of the findings

It is clear that how the respondents perceive the IoM and how the IoM is portrayed in the government's websites presents a complex situation. Firstly both the respondents and the websites looked at the IoM from two points of view: as a business environment and as a residential environment. These two viewpoints emerged as main themes in the analysis of the two datasets and

were supported by a number of subthemes, which reflected perceptions and messages about contributing characteristics of these two environments.

After comparing and contrasting the themes and the subthemes of the datasets, it can be concluded that most of the IoM's business environment characteristics shown through the websites did not align with how the respondents perceived this environment, which reflects the fact that, as one of the interviewees put it, "the IoM is a difficult place to do business". On the other hand, the alignment and misalignment of the characteristics of the residential environment demonstrated that whether the IoM is a great place to live is very much dependent on the age and family status of the respondents.

A very important finding was the fact that misalignment corresponded with feelings of dissatisfaction and frustration for the respondents because the characteristics of the environment not only did not fulfil their expectations, but were impacting the day to day running of their businesses. The opposite was true for characteristics where the perceptions and website messages were aligned. However the dissatisfaction/satisfaction was not caused by misalignment/alignment rather the situations the respondents had to deal with on daily basis.

From the interviews, it is clear that despite the marketing and branding campaigns over the years, the image of the IoM still barely exists and where it exists, with regards to business it is closely related to the taxation regime, while as a place of residence it is still unfavourable. The decision of the respondents to relocate for the business people was simply based on the taxation, while for the talented employees was influenced by the job and an overspill of the UK's image.

What all these findings mean for the IoM and what the implications are, is the subject of discussion in the next chapter.

Post script:

During the course of this research (three years), the researcher had further interaction with the respondents and gathered further information, albeit anecdotally and not in formal interviews. From these conversations it was clear that the sense of dissatisfaction has been so profound to trigger actions from some of the research participants. Further evidence of how profound the dissatisfaction is reflected in the fact that one of the respondents relocated their business to the UK, another one closed their IoM branch, a third respondent started a new business but in a different jurisdiction. It is clear that the dissatisfaction is not just people 'moaning' about the bureaucracy, rather a profound frustration that is influencing these business people's behaviour. What appears to make this

situation worse was, as one of the interviewees (6) suggested in the interview, that the government appears not to be interested in finding out why some businesses leave the island.

5 Chapter 5. Discussion of findings

The previous chapter addressed the first three objectives of this research through examining and analysing the way that the IoM is portrayed by the IoM government website, the perceptions of the research participants about the IoM and comparing and contrasting these two datasets. The outcome of the analysis was a number of themes and subthemes which, in the case of the websites contents, reflect the aims of the IoM government to promote the IoM as “a great place to work and live” and, in the case of the respondents reflected their lived experiences.

Building on the earlier chapters, in this chapter the fourth objectives of the research is addressed.

- To evaluate how the adoption of place branding and marketing strategies might help to manage the alignment between communicated image of the IoM and business people perceptions and assist in addressing the challenge of attracting new businesses and talented workforce in the IoM

The various findings of the literature review, the findings from the data collected from this research (how the IoM is portrayed by the government communications and how people (albeit a small sample) perceive the IoM), are drawn together in order to generate further insights into the current initiative to attract business and talent to the IoM, to identify the implications of this situation and put forward pertinent recommendations.

Therefore, this chapter starts with the examination of the datasets in terms of theoretical concepts in place branding field. Further, the outcomes of the finding section are compared and discussed in the light of what wider research in the area of place branding and marketing suggests. The chapter closes by highlighting the implications derived from the discussion and how these implications could be addressed.

5.1 Defining IoM identity and IoM brand identity

In order to be able to draw from the research in the place branding and marketing field, the next step would be to interpret the findings in relation to theoretical context (Cresswell, 1998) of place branding and marketing. Starting from the conclusions of the Literature Review, Figure 8 below, depicts in a simplistic way the relationship between the main concepts in place branding and marketing.

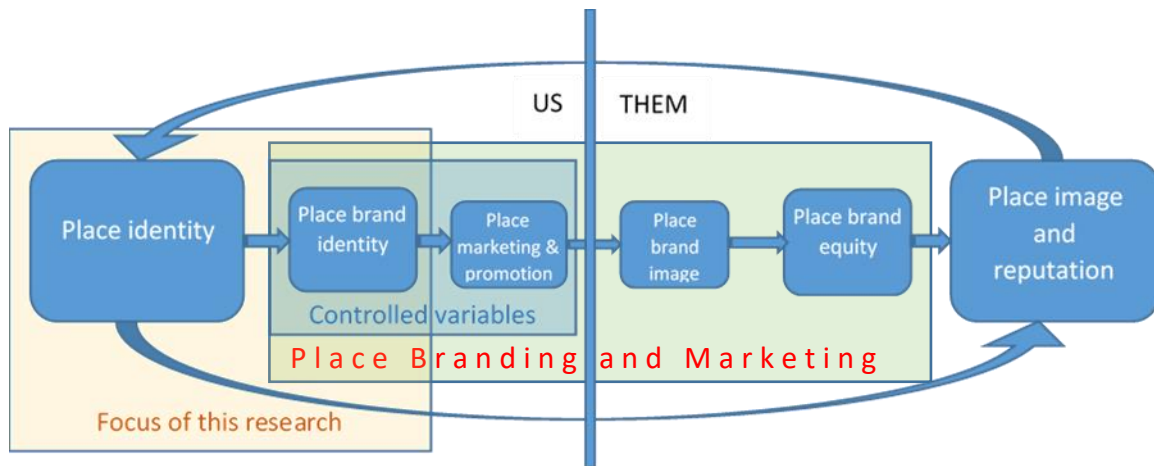


Figure 8 Links between Place Identity, Image and Branding

The literature suggests that place branding and marketing is one of the factors that can potentially influence/create a favourable place image and reputation. While it is strongly emphasised that the Figure 8 is a very simplistic delineation of the place branding and marketing processes, it could be argued that in broad lines, place branding and marketing would start with creating a place brand identity which reflects the place identity. This place brand identity is promoted through place marketing and various promotion methods in order to create a place brand image in the audiences' minds. As place brand image is only temporary (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000; Zenker, 2014), thus the aim is to build a place brand equity, which over the years could be the main influence on the place image and reputation that the audiences hold for the place. As illustrated in the picture through a vertical blue line, there is a clear distinction between the place – US - (internal stakeholders, place identity and the part of branding process that starts on the place) and the external audiences – THEM - (place image and the processes that take place outside the place, in the audience's mind).

Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) consider the websites as “potentially the most powerful brand-building tool” (p.237) that should reflect and be driven by brand identity, an aspirational view of what the brand owners want the brand to stand for. Similarly in terms of places, Florek et al. (2006) suggest that a website communicates to its visitors the place brand identity, which Brown et al. (2006) call “the intended image”; in other words how and what a place should be from the website owners point of view. Therefore, the way that the IoM is represented in all six websites reflects an aspirational view of the government for the IoM which, following Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) and Florek et al. (2006) line of argument, could arguably be understood as a reflection of the IoM brand identity.

The other dataset comprised the interviews of an albeit small sample of business people, which allowed deep insights into these business people's perceptions about the IoM. As suggested in the literature review, the perceptions of the people who interact with and live inside the place arguably can be treated as offering a representation of the place identity (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013). Following on from this line of argument it might be implied that the perceptions of the people who interact and live their lives in the IoM represent the collective view of the IoM identity. This is especially true for the people who were born and have lived most of their lives in the IoM. While it is clear that the perceptions of the respondents who were born and brought up in the IoM could arguably be considered as representations of the IoM's identity, it is not very clear whether the perceptions of the relocated people would be a representation of the IoM image or its identity.

The sample of the participants in this research was comprised by one third (1/3) of people born in the IoM and two thirds (2/3) people who have relocated to the IoM, which for the latter group means that up to a point in time these people were physically, cognitively or emotionally outside the place in question (the IoM). The perceptions of the people who are outside the geographical space in physical, cognitive and emotional terms, might be considered to represent the place image. Thus it could be argued that the perceptions of the relocated people about the IoM before relocating, could be a representation of the image of the IoM at that point in time. What is interesting in this case, is the fact that these people have crossed the spatial and temporal boundary to live inside the place, however, whether they feel inside or outside the place, raises the question whether their perceptions post relocation could be considered as representations of the place identity or place image. The specificity of an Island highlights the fact that physically, people can only be in or out, there is no such thing as close or somewhere in between.

In the divide between "us" and "them", Zenker and Beckmann (2013) suggest that it is the home residence that defines in which group the individual belongs, which implies their place identity. Out of the ten relocated research participants, three were looking for the earliest job or business opportunity to leave the IoM, while the other seven had made the IoM their home and would not even consider living anywhere else. However, when asked whether they would identify themselves with the IoM all of them but one said "no". They would only identify themselves with their place of birth despite for the majority of them having a strong sense of attachment with the IoM. Hernández et al. (2007) claim that place attachment is a precursor of place identity and it is strongly influenced by the length of the residence. This research findings could support the claim with regards to the influence of the length of residence in place attachment, but found little evidence that place attachment could lead to development of place identity, despite the length of residence. It was

evident in the interviews that some of the relocated interviewees, despite having lived in the IoM for many years, were still looking at the IoM as outsiders, while some others, despite frustrations and dissatisfaction, were looking at the IoM as insiders or as part of the place. But at no point during the interviews did the respondents claim to identify themselves with the IoM.

The sample interviewed for this research is very small to draw conclusions from about the entire relocated business community in the IoM, yet, what is clear for this particular group of people (the relocated respondents) is that the IoM's identity as a place bears no links with these individuals' place identity. This creates a complicated picture when looking at the IoM as a place. As confirmed by the government official, "the IoM is more cosmopolitan than ever, with 52% of its population being non-Manx born". Alaux et al. (2015) suggest that the identity of a place is closely linked to the place identity of its residents, and the weaker the identity of place the weaker the image of the place. This conclusion of Alaux et al. (2015) appears to be consistent with another finding of this research, the non-existent image of the IoM. However, despite the fact that the identity of a place cannot be created artificially (Alaux et al., 2015), according to Alaux et al. (2015) and Massey (1994) the identity of a place can be strengthened by strengthening the bond of social relations between individuals, regardless where they came from.

In this research it is clear that what are being compared are messages directed to particular audiences with perceptions triggered by the lived experiences, which for this discussion will be considered as representations of the place identity. Furthermore, considering that place identity is developed through a dialectic exchange with place image (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013), perceptions of both the local and the relocated research participants, albeit a small sample, presented an invaluable wide continuum of information between place identity and place image, which through the analysis process generated several subthemes and themes and will be further discussed in the next section.

It is important to stress that the IoM identity presented and discussed in this research relates strictly to the perceptions of only the sample of the research participants and given the size of the sample, cannot be used to generalise or imply the identity of the entire IoM business community or the IoM population.

5.2 Comparing and contrasting IoM identity with IoM brand identity

In the previous section it was identified that how the IoM is portrayed through the government websites could be arguably treated as a reflection of the IoM brand identity, and how the respondents perceive the IoM could be arguably considered as the IoM identity. This section is

dedicated into discussing the outcomes from comparing and contrasting the IoM identity with the IoM brand identity.

Looking back at the literature, in Kalandides' (2011) five elements of place, namely materiality, power, practices, institutions and representations; government represents one of the institutions which, when combined with the power and practices, it is part of and at the same time has a profound impact on shaping place identity. Therefore, when considered from the perspective suggested by Kalandides (2011), how the IoM government displays its role and activity in the websites represents an important element of the place brand identity. Similarly, how the respondents perceive the government and its activity represents an important element of the place identity.

Returning to the analysis of the messages conveyed on the Isle of Man government websites, both in terms of text and imagery, it might be argued that collectively this messaging represents the way the IoM government would wish the target audiences to perceive the IoM, which is congruent with Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) definition of brand identity as an aspirational “set of brand associations”(p.43) or characteristics. For those responsible for the websites the goal was recognised as that of creating a strong and distinctive ‘place brand’. Here the two main thematic messages, that IoM government has sought to convey through its websites are those of **the IoM-an attractive location for business** and **the IoM’s great quality of life for individuals and families**. These two thematic messages are quite distinctive which might suggest that what is being presented through the websites (as a whole) is a dual (or multiple) perspective on place brand identity or simply a dual place brand identity (Ren & Blichfeldt, 2011). Gould and Skinner (2007) have termed this dual approach to place brand strategy as ‘Janus’ strategy, which for Ren and Blichfeldt (2011) is a way to create a “heterogeneous and inclusive brand” (p.431).

The websites of some of the agencies, such as Finance IoM, Business IoM, Digital IoM and partially the Locate IoM, focus more on portraying the IoM as a great place for business and work, or in other words represent the IoM’s business brand identity (BBI). The focus of Locate IoM website was more about the life in the IoM representing the IoM’s residential brand identity (RBI), whereas the Visit IoM website, with the focus in the IoM attractions, represented a touristic brand identity, however, other brand identities of the IoM are out of scope for this research.

Reviewing the interview data, a broadly common dual perspective emerged, namely interviewees held/ expressed two differing views about the IoM – one from a narrowly focused business perspective and a contrasting view when considering the IoM from a lifestyle/residential perspective.

Considering that the perceptions of the interviewees are a representation of the place identity (or possibly place image as well), it is important to distinguish between the two perspectives and consider them as mirroring the idea of two different place identities. In psychology it has long been established that individuals exhibit different identities to different people or groups of people (James, 1890). Congruent with Massey's (1994) view that places have multiple identities and looking at place identity as a transposition of identity from human to places (Kalandides, 2012), it could perhaps be argued that the two perspectives exhibited by the respondents in this research are a representation of two of the identities of the IoM, the Business Identity and the Residential Identity.

It appears that brand identities of the IoM are congruent at this level with the place identities as expressed by the interviewees. Yet, this level of comparison is too broad to yield any insights, therefore all the themes and subthemes (associations and characteristics) derived from the analysis will be further discussed in detail, contrasting each of the identities (business and residential) and their features separately.

5.2.1 IoM Business Brand Identity (BBI) v IoM Business Identity (BI) - (brand messages v perceptions)

The subthemes and themes generated through the interviews reflect factors that are important to the business people for conducting their businesses in the IoM, and how they experienced these factors highlights some of the underlying drivers of their perceptions about the IoM. The type of causal relationship observed in this study resemble with the proposition advanced by Botschen et al. (2017), who suggest that "touch point experiences" drive creation of "a set of mental associations" (p.154). Interestingly, the opinions across the sample with regards to the day-to-day experiences of the business environment differed very little. It is important to highlight that the lived experiences reported by respondents on this study, or the "stimulation received" (p.14) from the environment, arguably might be seen to reflect one of the key influences that Scocchia, Valsecchi and Triesch (2014) suggest may have a significant influence over people's perceptions. Therefore when most of these perceptions differ from what is presented in the government websites, it might suggest that the BBI (business brand identity) and the BI (business identity) of the IoM for the particular sample of research participants are not aligned. Braun, Eshuis, Klijn and Zenker (2018) confirm that alignment of the place identity with the communicated image or place brand identity contributes in improving place reputation. However measuring the level of alignment in quantitative terms is outside the scope of this research and it is recognised to present one of its limitations.

Following from the discussion above, the relatively crude comparison of the various features of the business environment as presented in the IoM government websites with the perceptions of the sample of the business people who live in the IoM, shown in Table 9, reflects the alignment/misalignment of the components/characteristics of the IoM's business brand identity and business identity. It appears that apart from the taxation, the IoM's business brand identity and business identity are not aligned in most of the characteristics. This misalignment appears to coincide with a growing sense of dissatisfaction/frustration of most of the interviewees with the business environment in the IoM, however the coincidence does not imply a causal relationship. Most importantly the dissatisfaction of the respondents stemmed from the direct impact that the absence or poor quality of the business environment characteristics had in their business or career, rather than the misalignment between IoM's brand identity (the website messages) and the IoM's identity (their experiences of the business environment). The misalignment simply exacerbated the dissatisfaction.

As highlighted by many authors (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000; S. Jones & Kubacki, 2014; Ooi, 2008; Zavattaro, 2013) brand identity represents an aspirational view of the identity, thus a certain level of misalignment was expected. The misalignment in all factors but two of them, the taxation and shortage of talent, it could be speculated to suggest a number of things. Perhaps based on one of the emerging subthemes, it could be speculated that people "moan" (interviewee 13) all the time as they are never happy despite everything being fine.

However the frustration and the dissatisfaction expressed during the interviews suggest that it is not simply a temporary situation of people moaning about minor administrative inconsistencies, rather a cumulative negative view about the business environment in the IoM. This negative view came through in the interviews from the fact that two of the respondents were looking for the earliest opportunity to leave, while for a third one the high costs of relocating the business back to the UK were the only reason for still being on the island. Albeit anecdotal evidence (outside the interview process) the facts that another interviewee relocated their business to the UK, one closed their IoM branch and a third started a business in a different jurisdiction represent a worrying state of affairs.

Considering the size of the sample of the research participants, from a total of 15 (local and relocated business people), the numbers of businesses leaving or wanting to leave the Island represent quite a high proportion. However this sample is very small to be representative of the business environment in the IoM, thus it could be suggested that if replicated more widely might yield more accurate insights. What this evidence (albeit partially anecdotal) suggests is that the issue facing the

IoM is not a superficial matter of message misalignment. (Even the alignment in the shortage of talent, does not become a positive feature but rather reinforces the negative ones.)

The misalignment identified is a reflection of the dissatisfaction expressed in the interviews, representing a more profound issue. This dissatisfaction has impacted the behaviours, businesses and people leaving or wanting to leave. It is not clear whether the government are oblivious to what is happening, or they know and they turn a blind eye, as speculated by one of the respondents. However what this research has found, is a more profound challenge for the IoM government; the attrition of the businesses currently in the IoM rather than the attraction of new ones. It is evident from the findings that this challenge cannot be addressed only by messages or marketing communications, and congruent with the wide consensus in the place branding literature, “place branding is not about slogans and logos” (Govers, 2013) rather developing places in order to fulfil stakeholders’ expectations.

Despite the dissatisfaction with many elements of the business environment, it was noticeable that most of the relocated business people interviewed have stayed in the IoM, suggesting that either the taxation benefits are so great to counteract the dissatisfaction with the rest of the business environment characteristics, or there are other features which together with taxation make the IoM a good place to relocate. The next section will discuss the IoM Residential Identity as opposed to the IoM Residential Brand Identity in order to gain further insights.

5.2.2 IoM Residential Brand Identity (RBI) v IoM Residential Identity (RI)

After discussing the business environment, this section will discuss how the lifestyle or residential life is perceived by business people participating in this research, the IoM’s residential identity, and how the residential life is portrayed by the websites, the IoM’s residential brand identity.

From the findings, in a similar way as the IoM Business Identity and the IoM Business Brand Identity, the IoM Residential Identity and the IoM Residential Business Identity appear to broadly align on the importance that both the government and the interviewees attach to the quality of life or the quality of the living environment.

Looking at Table 10 most of the characteristics of the IoM residential identity are aligned with the IoM’s residential brand identity and this alignment corresponded with satisfaction. Respondents were highly complimentary for some of the attributes of the IoM residential environment, expecting more to be done in promoting those features. However some of the characteristics corresponded with both satisfaction and dissatisfaction, depending on the age of the respondents and their family

status. These findings are congruent with Florida's (2002) and Whisler et al. (2008) suggestion that age and family status are critical factors in how people view different place characteristics.

Similarly as for the business identity, the correspondence between the satisfaction or dissatisfaction and the alignment between IoM's residential brand identity and IoM's residential identity implied little causality. Satisfaction and dissatisfaction were directly linked with the existence, absence or quality of the attributes identified, rather than the way they were presented in the website.

5.2.3 Managing alignment between Place Identity and Place Brand Identity

Initially this research set out to analyse whether there was alignment between the messages conveyed by the IoM government through their websites (the IoM brand identity) and the perceptions of the research participants (the IoM identity) because, as confirmed by Braun, Eshuis, Klijn and Zenker (2018), place reputation is greatly enhanced when the communicated place image is aligned with the place identity. From the findings and the discussion in the previous sections it was evident that there was alignment for certain brand attributes and misalignment for others however, the alignment/misalignment of the attributes unveiled a far more important and fundamental issue: the respondents' satisfaction/dissatisfaction with some of the brand attributes or characteristics of the place. The satisfaction/dissatisfaction was not linked to how the attributes were presented in websites rather the quality or absence of these attributes. This finding confirms what other researchers (Anholt, 2008b; Govers, 2013) in place branding have long insisted on: place branding is not just about marketing messages but first and foremost about the intrinsic attributes of the places.

Analysing the brand attributes in both Table 9 and Table 10, it appears that while from the business point of view the IoM offers a great benefit such as low personal and corporate tax rates, it lacks important operational features. While taxes can be a very important motivator, all the other factors listed in Table 9 relate to necessary features that if positive can contribute to smooth running of a business, but would not create a significant benefit to the businesses or contribute to their competitive edge. Yet, if any of them were absent, it could bring the business operations to a halt.

Looking at the lifestyle/residential perspective, the IoM offers important features that contribute to a good life but lacks features such a vivid culture and night life. Features such as a good health system, good quality education, safety represent factors that while in place do not make the life exciting, yet their absence would drastically impact the quality of life. Factors such as entertainment make life exciting, however, the importance of their absence is very much dependent of the age and family status of the individuals. For most of the factors in the lifestyle/residential view there is either

alignment, or both alignment and misalignment between the residential identity and brand residential identity, even though issues such as morals and ethics appeared to be a concern only for part of the sample or the opinions amongst the respondents appeared contradictory.

This study followed an inductive approach, which implies that the aim of the research was not to prove or disprove any theory however, as suggested by Bryman and Bell (2015) it entails a “theoretical reflection on the set of data” (p.13). This theoretical reflection on the data was part of the quest for sense-making (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005) and guided the researcher in their search to identify, adapt or create frameworks that could potentially become the mechanism to interpret the data and be able to put forward recommendations for issues identified through analysis and discussion of the data. Therefore, as a way of making sense of the findings from the data, the first step was to view them through the lens of previous research in place branding and marketing field or any of the other fields/disciplines that have contributed to the progress of place branding and marketing research, as mentioned in the Literature Review chapter.

The features/characteristics which emerged from both interviews and websites appear to suggest that the experiences that the respondents had in the IoM have generated satisfaction in some areas and dissatisfaction in others. Botschen et al. (2017) suggest that positive experiences can act as place brand drivers and negative ones can act as place brand impellers, however, they do not go further in their specification of brand drivers and impellers. Similarly in consumer behaviour, van Raaij and Wandwossen (1978) suggest that different brand attributes can generate satisfaction or dissatisfaction. In order to aid the classification of brand attributes, van Raaij and Wandwossen (1978) conclude that “Consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction studies will benefit from the two-factor need theories (Maslow, 1965; Alderfer, 1969; Herzberg, 1966)” (p. 5), for which, similarly to the hygiene and motivator factors, they suggest the two type brand attributes: the inhibitor attributes (similar to hygiene factors) and the facilitator attributes (similar to motivational factors). Further research by Maddox (1981) supports the application of “Two-factor Theory” in consumer behaviour in order to “maximise satisfaction” and “minimise dissatisfaction” (p.102) for the consumers. More recently Wang and Zhang (2009) confirm that the “Two-factor Theory” (Herzberg, 1966) can be applied in brand selection. This study confirms that Hygiene factors are brand attributes linked to dissatisfaction and influence the possibility of non-selection of the brand, whereas Motivational factors are brand attributes linked to satisfaction and influence the brand selection (Wang & Zhang, 2009). Even though place branding is not the same as product or corporate branding, Olins (2002) suggests that “many techniques are similar” (p.247). Therefore understanding the importance and

the impact of various place brand attributes using the lens of the “Two-factor Theory”, would potentially assist in a better understanding of the perceptions of the IoM’s brand consumers.

However, talking about consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction raises the issue: who are the place brand consumers? Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) and Skinner (2018) assert that place brands are co-creation between the consumers (who are outside the place) and various stakeholders in the place, in the sense that stakeholders change the place brand to match the perceptions of the external audiences, while Anholt’s (2006) GMI index and many other indices view place brand as a feature to be consumed by audiences outside the place (Hereźniak, Florek, & Augustyn, 2018). Also in the view taken by critical authors (Aronczyk, 2008; Fan, 2006; Jansen, 2008; Kaneva, 2011), the place brand as a concept (and consequently place branding as a process) is a source of antagonism, because it is viewed as a feature to be produced for the enjoyment/benefit of one group (the external audiences) on the back of the other group (the residents). The issue in the context of this research is that place is not a product amongst many, or just the backdrop of a unique experience (Parker, 2008) as in the case of tourism, which lasts only a few days. Relocating a business or relocating for a job is a far more significant engagement in many aspects. The context of the IoM where 52% of the population are not born in the IoM would suggest that co-creation of the IoM brand is at a deeper level than many other bigger countries; for example in the UK migrants are only 14% of the population (Vargas-Silva & Rienzo, 2019), while in the USA they are only 13.7 % of the population (Lange & Torbati, 2018). In the IoM’s case, the external audiences become internal stakeholders, and considering that they are 52% of the residents suggests that satisfying this audience is as important as the attraction of new ones. This fact also suggests that the relocated respondents’ perceptions represent a transition from reflecting the place image to being a reflection of place identity. So in trying to answer the question: “who are the IoM brand consumers?”, it appears that first and foremost the IoM brand consumers are the IoM residents and businesses, who are equally important stakeholders in the IoM brand creation. What became clear in the interviews was the fact that the majority of issues that caused dissatisfaction were the same for both local respondents and the relocated ones. Therefore the next section considers looking at this research’s findings through the “Two-factor Theory” lens.

5.2.4 Adapting “Two-factor Theory”

Turning to examine the Two-factor Theory in the context of this research, the operational factors of Business Identity such as: funding, government support, infrastructure, legislation, workforce availability could be arguably considered as brand hygiene attributes because their presence or being above certain threshold does not bring satisfaction, rather their absence or being below certain threshold causes dissatisfaction. While taxation benefits could be seen as a brand motivator attribute

because at the level they are now, they create satisfaction, yet if they were to match the UK levels, they might not create dissatisfaction. However, if the taxation benefits would lower below UK taxation benefits levels, they would create dissatisfaction and become brand hygiene attributes, because for most of the relocated respondents, taxation benefits were the only reason for relocating to the IoM. Furthermore one of the respondents explicitly warned that other places are offering similar taxation benefits, therefore the IoM needs to review the incentives it offers in order to stay competitive in attracting business. The classification of the attributes of the Business Brand identity are summarised in the Table 11 below.

Business Brand Identity	Brand Hygiene Attribute	Brand Motivator Attribute
Great Taxation		x
Funding	x	
Government support	x	
Legal system	x	
Infrastructure (banking, postal, telecoms)	x	
Access to UK	x	
Availability of talent	x	
Career opportunities	x	

Table 11 Brand Attribute classification for BBI

Similarly looking at the Residential Identity, factors such as safety, education, health care and barriers to entry could be considered as hygiene attributes because their absence creates dissatisfaction, but being at a higher quality level do not create higher levels of satisfaction. Features such as leisure and entertainment amenities, community, natural environment or ethical and moral values could be classed both as a hygiene attribute or motivator; this however, will depend on the individual's demographic characteristics. Research from Mellander et al. (2011) identified and measured a number of factors which have an important influence in the decision to stay in a place such as the beauty of the environment, ability to meet people, however, the economic conditions did not appear as important. The classification of the Residential Brand Identity attributes is summarised in the Table 12 below.

Residential Brand Identity	Brand Hygiene attribute	Brand Motivator attribute
Great natural environment	x	
Safest place in the UK	x	
Stable economy and good living standard		x
Great health and Education	x	
Outdoors sports		x
Great Community		x
Being welcome- Barriers to entry	x	
Variety of entertainment		x
Ethical and moral values		x

Table 12 Brand Attribute classification for RBI

Obviously the IoM's brand identities in the websites were portrayed in an attractive way for both types of attributes, the hygiene attributes and the motivators, thus representing an aspirational view of the IoM.

After classifying the brand attributes into hygiene and motivators for both Business and Residential Brand Identities, the next step was to re-examine in the light of this classification the Table 9 and Table 10, where IoM's Brand Identities were compared and contrasted with the IoM's identities. From Table 9 it is clear that the IoM's Business Identity is aligned with IoM's Business Brand Identity for the motivator attribute but it is not aligned for the hygiene attributes. The opposite is true for the IoM's Residential Identity and IoM's Residential Brand Identity from Table 10.

It is clear that what creates the dissatisfaction is the misalignment in the hygiene attributes of the Business Brand Identity, and this affects most of the businesses. It is the misalignment of the hygiene attributes which "makes the IoM a difficult place to do business" (interviewee 11). What became clear from the interviews though it was the great satisfaction from the taxation regime (the motivator). The issue is: how far can the inconsistencies and bureaucracy be tolerated because of the tax. It was evident from the interviews that for some of the businesses the tax benefit was so great, to make them stay in the IoM despite difficulties from the hygiene factors, while for others it was not. In the balance between the two (the hygiene and motivators) there is a tipping point and operating at the tipping point is risky. This is clear from the evidence (albeit partially anecdotal) that

where other places offer better hygiene factors, despite less attractive motivators many businesses will tend to gravitate towards these places.

The misalignment in the motivator attributes for the Residential Brand Identity relates to the recreational life and entertainment; while it is important for a particular segment (the young and childless) it does not strongly affect other people. However, it is important to highlight that despite the fact that the entertainment is treated as a motivator attribute, it could be classed as a hygiene attribute for certain groups of people because it gives rise to dissatisfaction. Some of the interviewees highlighted that the young and childless people do not want to come to the IoM, while many local young people who go to study in the UK do not return. Furthermore the young and childless people are the ones who work in the tech and innovative companies and not being able to attract them can have a detrimental effect on many businesses.

The ambiguity in classifying an attribute as a motivator or hygiene attribute suggests that classification of the attributes is dependent on the demographic characteristics of the group under study (the audience) and it would require statistical measurements and analysis, to provide generalizable results which goes beyond the scope of this research.

To aid visualisation of how the different factors influence different identities, Figure 37 below tries to capture conceptually how the “Two factor Theory” could be presented in the case of the IoM, based on the discussion above. It is important to emphasise that this is only a conceptual model and does not represent any quantitative measures.

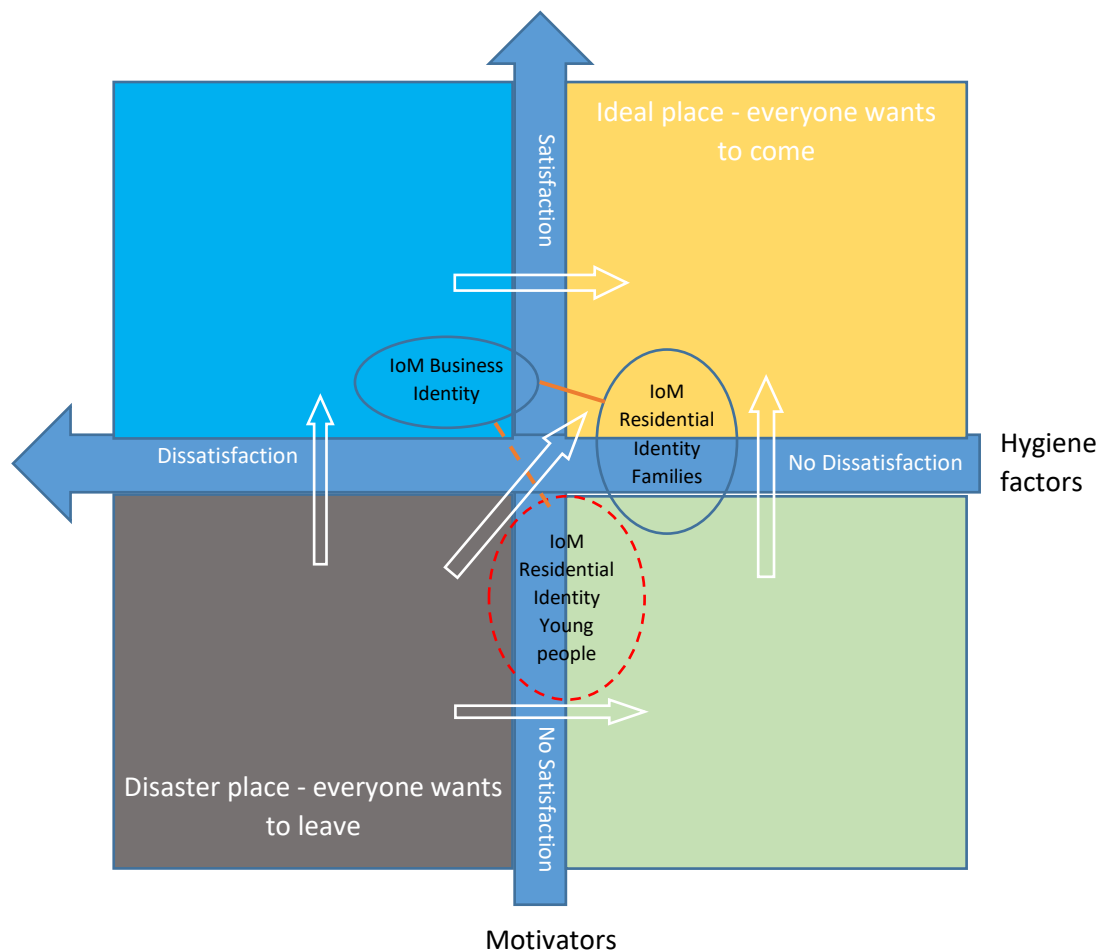


Figure 37 Conceptual adaptation of Two-factor Theory for IoM's case

The two axis in the Figure 37 represent the Hygiene and Motivational factors, which create four distinctive matrix positions/ categorisations. Bottom left quadrant represents those place identities where both Hygiene and Motivator factors are non-existent or if they exist the quality is poor and gives rise to dissatisfaction. This quadrant at its extreme might represent the experience of people/ businesses during highly adverse times, for example wars or major economic recessions, where everyone tries to leave. The top right quadrant indicates places/identities where the Hygiene factors do not create dissatisfaction and they offer incentives or Motivators which give rise to satisfaction. This quadrant represents circumstances /locations where everyone wants to go, some sort of utopia or place identities that fulfil both Hygiene and Motivator factors. The top left and bottom right quadrants miss either hygiene or motivators factors. The white arrows denote the tendency of people to choose to relocate toward places, which identity suggests the existence of hygiene factors and motivators matching the audience characteristics. Different identities of the same place are clearly connected with each other, as they represent the different facets of the same place. As the same attributes can place different identities in different quadrants, this models could also help

identifying how different stakeholder groups can be impacted by developing certain characteristics of the place. Also when looking to target a particular audience, the marketers can plot in this conceptual model the place's different identities and the audience's expectations for these identities. This way they can identify whether their offer is good enough for the particular audience, whether they can improve place's attributes or target a different audience which expectations are closer to what the place has to offer. Similarly for the audiences, when considering a place is a matter of balancing their needs with what the place has to offer.

Considering the adapted "Two-factor Theory" model in Figure 37 in the context of the IoM's identities, based on the fact that the Hygiene attributes of the Business Identity (infrastructure, government support, funding etcetera) have created dissatisfaction while the Motivators (taxation) have created satisfaction, the IoM's Business Identity would be placed in the top left quadrant. The IoM's residential identity was dependent on the audiences' demographics. So when the audience is families with children, the IoM's Residential Identity could be placed between the quadrants on the right hand side, because there are no hygiene attributes to cause dissatisfaction, while there are some attributes that give rise to satisfaction (facilities for children), the facilities for adults do not give rise to satisfaction. However for young and childless audiences (represented by red circle) leisure and entertainment could be considered as Hygiene factors therefore the IoM's residential identity could be placed between lower two quadrants.

The qualitative data collected from this research, suggest that the classification of the attributes in hygiene and motivators, might help in identifying important brand attributes for attraction of particular audiences, however further research could help in identifying the outcomes of combinations of various hygiene attributes and motivators for multiple place identities and different audiences. Wang and Zhang (2009) suggest that "brand selection tends not to happen" (p.4577) if hygiene attributes are not in place whereas motivator attributes increase the probability of brand being selected once the hygiene factors are fulfilled. So in the case of the IoM, if the hygiene attributes of the Business Brand Identity give rise to dissatisfaction, this means that the businesses face challenges to operate in the IoM, despite the high incentives offered by the motivator attribute (the taxation regime). Clearly if a business cannot operate effectively, they cannot create profits to benefit from the taxation regime, as it was the case for some of the small businesses or start-ups in the IoM.

Considering the debate whether the place identity and place brand identity should align or not, perhaps it could be argued that at least the hygiene factors should be aligned in order for the brand to be considered by the consumer. As highlighted in the literature review, many authors (Aaker &

Joachimsthaler, 2000; Jones & Kubacki, 2014; Ooi, 2008) suggest that brand identity should be aspirational which implies that place identity and place brand identity will not fully align, however, other researchers (Anholt, 2006; Sevin, 2011) strongly oppose this view. Some authors consider the brand as quality assurance (Egan, 2008) or a promise (De Chernatony, 2008). Anholt (2006) strongly insists that advertising and marketing should only help to show the audiences what the place is, otherwise it is nothing but propaganda, and as Blackwell and Stephan, (2004) suggest it “only accelerates the demise of poor ... brands”(p. 166).

Yet, looking at the sample of the research participants, it appears that the combination: alignment of the hygiene attributes for residential identity and motivator attribute for business identity, has yielded in 7 out of 10 relocated respondents making the IoM their home for themselves and their families, but not necessarily for their business. Looking at the IoM’s demographic data, the IoM population has nearly doubled compared to 1961 (1961- 47.166 inhabitant, 2016 – 83.314 inhabitants (Isle of Man Government, 2017a)) or 52% of the current population in the IoM are non-Manx born. However, this last figure at the same time shows quite a high level of churn (people moving to the Island and leaving the island). It would be pure speculation to assume that based only on these data, the Two-factor Theory and this particular combination of attributes can generate a valid answer. Further quantitative and qualitative data on people’s relocation to and from the IoM could contribute in establishing the validity and accuracy of the “Two-factor Theory” in branding the IoM.

5.2.5 Conclusions of the discussion

It was evident that while for other places, the image and identity are two distinctive concepts, in the case of the IoM they are the extremes of a continuum, where the perceptions of the respondents could be considered to fluctuate between the two. Consequently, the task of trying to enhance the place image for the IoM’s practitioners becomes more complex. Nevertheless it is clear that the IoM residents are the “brand consumers and creators” therefore fulfilling their expectations should be the priority of the place branding process.

The ambiguity in the way the respondents viewed the IoM, similarly to how the IoM was presented in the governments’ websites, supported the suggestion by some authors (Gould & Skinner, 2007; Massey, 1994; Ren & Blichfeldt, 2011) that places have multiple identities, for example business identity, residential or touristic identity. Consequently, how the respondents viewed the IoM from the business perspective was considered to represent the IoM’s Business Identity, and how they viewed it from the residential perspective was considered to represent IoM’s Residential Identity.

Similarly, considering that the websites are a tool for communicating place brand identity (Florek et al., 2006), how the IoM was presented in the IoM governments websites was considered as representation of the IoM's Business Brand Identity from the business point of view and IoM's Residential Brand Identity, from the residential point of view. Therefore the alignment/ misalignment between the respondents' perceptions and the websites represented alignment/ misalignment between IoM's identity and IoM's brand identity.

Despite the complexity of untangling the identity and the image of the IoM, the major challenge of this discussion was the sense-making (Weick et al., 2005) from the main findings, notably the respondents way of viewing the IoM and their satisfaction/ dissatisfaction with various characteristics of the IoM. Following the insights derived from the findings combined with previous research in consumer and organisational behaviour, the "two-factor Theory" (Herzberg, 1966) was considered as a potential tool to aid the examination of the alignment/ misalignment of the IoM's identity and IoM's brand identity and aid a better understanding of their implications.

The Two-factor Theory assisted in identifying those characteristics or attributes of the place brand, which are necessary to avoid dissatisfaction (the hygiene attributes) and the attributes/ characteristics that create satisfaction (the motivators) for specific audiences. Once the characteristics are identified and classified, the decisions at the high government levels would be either to invest in improving places in order to satisfy the audiences, taking into consideration all social and economic implications of such decisions, or target audiences for which the place characteristics create satisfaction. Also this classification of the attributes can potentially assist the IoM practitioners with understanding the importance of creating a place brand that reflects the place identity but is aspirational at the same time. The insights derived from the findings and the discussion will guide the conclusions and the recommendations of this research which are drawn together in the next chapter.

6 Chapter 6. Conclusions, recommendations and limitations

This chapter finalises this research by firstly drawing conclusions from the findings and discussion. The chapter continues with a number of practical recommendations and closes by highlighting the limitations, contribution and suggestions for possible future research.

6.1 Conclusions

This section is dedicated to drawing conclusions from this research and entails two parts. In the first part, how the aim and the objectives of this research were satisfied will be re-examined. The second part will contain the reflections of the researcher on the sense making journey throughout this thesis and what insights it has provided for the place branding and marketing process.

6.1.1 Evaluation of research aim and objectives

The aim of the present research was to explore how a better understanding of the place identity, place image and place branding process and the links between them, might better inform the development of an enhanced place branding strategy for the IoM. In turn, it might be argued that this would assist in attracting talented workforce and businesses. The broader research aim was divided into four objectives, the achievement of each of which contributed toward identification of the model and its adaption.

The research conducted used a qualitative approach and the analysis of the empirical data collected through interviews and websites contributed to the achievement of the first two objectives.

Objective 1. To analyse and compare the way in which the Isle of Man (IoM)'s identity and image are currently perceived and understood amongst business owners and talented people who currently live in the IoM

Objective 2. To analyse how the IoM is portrayed through the IoM government web-based communications aimed at businesses and talented people looking to relocate

Careful review of the findings generated from the empirical data analysis allowed a number of relevant conclusions to be drawn as below:

a. The strong sense of ambiguity that was observed when respondents looked at the place from different viewpoints simultaneously (similar to Janusian thinking (Rothenberg, 1971)), suggests that both business and residential life are as important for the respondents and cannot be separated.

- b. The findings clearly indicated that the IoM's attractive taxation regime was perhaps the single most important influence on positive perceptions of the IoM's business environment.
- c. The findings suggest that a thorough understanding of the expectations and perceptions of different stakeholders in the IoM is crucial not only for the segmentation process in place marketing, but for all IoM development and branding strategies.
- d. The weak or non-existing image of the IoM in respondents' perceptions, sometimes substituted by the UK's image, suggests once more the importance of places building their own image and reputation.
- e. From the thematic and sub thematic messages generated from the websites analysis, it can be concluded that the website owners have tried to convey a very positive image of the IoM. This positive image of the IoM occasionally was let down by the dumping of information in certain parts of the websites, but most importantly would be hard to sustain should it not match with the reality in the IoM.

The results and conclusions drawn from the analysis are indicators that suggest the fulfilment of the first two objectives.

Objective 3. To compare and contrast the way which the IoM is portrayed through government web based communications with the perceptions of the IoM held by the business people in the IoM

Addressing Objective 3 required comparing and contrasting the findings generated from the analysis of the interviews and the websites (the objectives 1 and 2). The outcomes of this process suggest that from the business perspective the respondents' perceptions were aligned with the website only with regards to taxation policies and partially with funding schemes. While from the residential point of view, the respondents' perceptions were aligned with the websites for most of the characteristics, however it was noticeable that there was misalignment for certain demographics (see Table 9 and Table 10 in Chapter 4. Findings). From the analysis it could be suggested:

- a. There is a clear coincidence of the misalignment between respondents' perceptions and the website messages, with a growing sense of dissatisfaction and frustration.
- b. Most of the respondents' perceptions about the IoM were built from the way they experienced the IoM rather than messages communicated through the websites.

- c. Respondent's dissatisfaction and frustration had very little to do with misalignment of the communicated messages with the real attributes of the business environment, rather the fact that the quality of some of the attributes of the place was not as the respondents expected.

Therefore what emerges clearly from this research is the fact that unless systems and processes to facilitate conducting business are in place, communications can do very little, and indeed arguably could prove counterproductive and exacerbate feelings of dissatisfaction and frustration by raising unrealistic expectations. Insights generated from comparing and contrasting the respondents perceptions with the website demonstrate the fulfilment of this objective.

Objective 4. To evaluate whether the adoption of place branding and marketing strategies might help to manage the alignment between communicated image of the IoM and business' people perceptions, thus aiding the efforts to address the challenge of attracting new businesses and talented workforce in the IoM

In order to address this objective, the various findings were discussed in Chapter 5. Discussion of findings) in the light of various theoretical concepts. In this chapter was argued that respondents' perceptions about the IoM could be treated as a representation of the IoM's identity and the way the IoM was portrayed in the government's websites could arguably be treated as a representation of the IoM's communicated image or the IoM's brand identity. Therefore, following the conclusions reached in the Objective 3, it could be suggested that the alignment/misalignment between respondents' perceptions and the website messages could be treated as alignment/misalignment between IoM's identity and IoM's brand identity. It was evident from the findings that the alignment/misalignment of the place attributes coincided with satisfaction/dissatisfaction of the respondents with respective place attributes. This dissatisfaction was not a direct result of misalignment, rather it was the absence or poor quality of the place characteristics. Nevertheless, the misalignment between what is communicated and what is in place, exacerbated the feelings of dissatisfaction.

The evaluation process of whether the adoption of place branding and marketing strategies might help manage the misalignment between place brand identity and place identity for the IoM, suggested that in the case of the IoM the issue is not simply managing the alignment/misalignment of communicated messages with reality, rather first managing stakeholders' expectations and then align the communicated messages. For this reason the focus was placed upon identifying a theory, framework or model which uses as its main variables the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of people with

features or attributes in different aspects of life and provides an aide to decision makers in the process of strategy formulation.

The process of identifying a theory, framework or creating a model, which uses people's satisfaction/dissatisfaction as main variables to help understand people's attitudes and behaviours in particular contexts or situations, involved critical reflection on the findings generated from the empirical data in the light of various theories. One of the theories which uses satisfaction/dissatisfaction as main variables is Herzberg's (1966) "Two-factor Theory" in organisational studies. Further research about the possible uses or adaptations of the "Two-factor Theory" in the marketing area, identified the adaptation of Herzberg's (1966) "Two-factor Theory" in consumer brand selection by Wang and Zhang (2009). This particular adaptation suggests that the "Two-factor Theory" offers a tool for classifying the brand attributes which could cause dissatisfaction, as the hygiene attributes, and the incentives to attract the target audience or the attributes which create satisfaction, as the motivator attributes. Therefore, adapting "Two-factor Theory" for application in place branding might potentially provide a tool which, similar to Wang and Zhang (2009) adaptation, can help classifying the place (brand) attributes into hygiene attributes, which absence or poor quality gives rise to dissatisfaction, and motivator attributes, which presence or good quality gives rise to satisfaction. Obviously when both the hygiene and motivator attributes of place brand identity reflect features of the place identity, which avoid dissatisfaction and create satisfaction for the brand consumers, represents the ideal scenario.

The problem here is that such idealised scenarios rarely exist in reality. Most places, including the IoM might not be able to fit the ideal scenario, therefore, using an adaptation of the "Two-factor Theory" (see Figure 37 brought back below for ease of illustration) can help analyse the potential impacts of the various place (or brand) attributes on people's behaviours. Utilising the type of analysis shown in Chapter 5, which consist of classifying the place brand attributes into hygiene factors or motivators, the brand managers can identify the needs for place improvement or, based on the existing characteristics of the place build the potential brand messages and marketing campaigns, in order to create a multi-layered offer tailored for particular audience segments. Positioning of the place identities, place brand identities and place brand image in the quadrants of the model in Figure 37 might serve as an indication of the gap between them and highlight which place (brand) attributes should take priority and assist alignment of these elements. It is of paramount importance to remember that the target audience of today are the future residents of the place, therefore aligning the Place Brand Identity with Place Identity is not a matter of cherry

picking what to show to the audiences rather, as the wide consensus in the place branding literature suggests, making places better for both present and future residents and businesses.

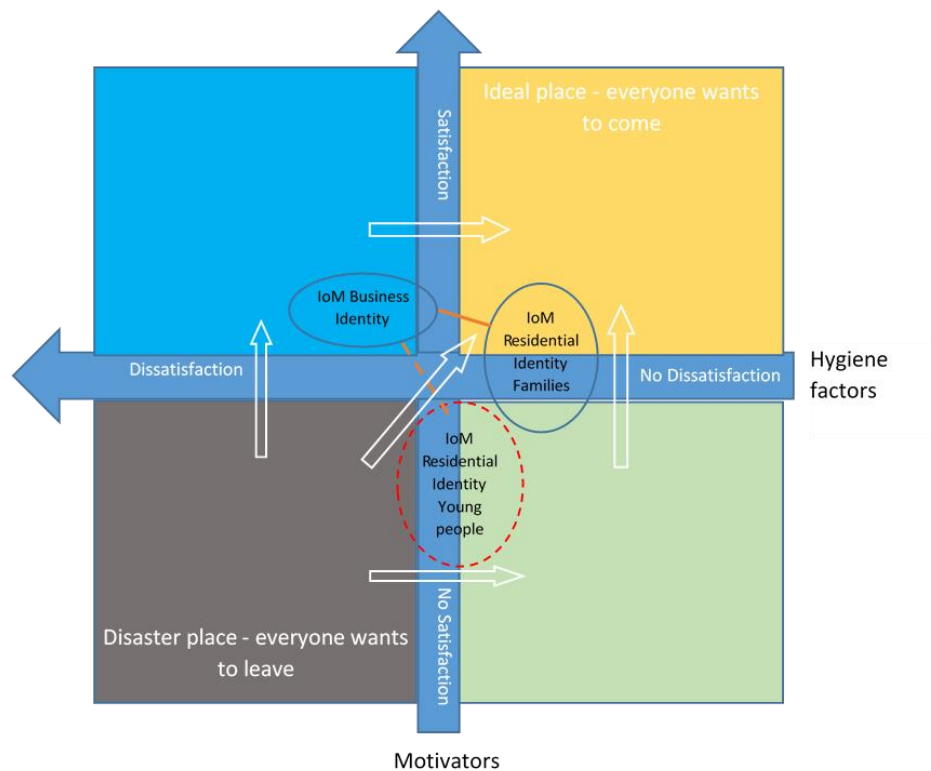


Figure 37 Conceptual adaptation of Two-factor Theory for IoM's case

In addition, in the case of the IoM, considering the fact that most of the relocated respondents had almost no image of the IoM before relocating, suggests that their dissatisfaction was not as a result of the mismatch of the expectations raised from the IoM's government websites, rather their previous experiences in other places or the overall image of the UK. Therefore it can be suggested that in the absence of a direct or mediated image of the place (the IoM), the audiences fill the gap with approximate images of the places close to them or what in their perceptions and beliefs sound similar. Matching the expectations raised from other places, makes the task harder for the IoM practitioners, however a better understanding of these expectations would clearly help. While it might sound daunting to try and capture the expectations of audiences round the world, for whom the IoM, a very small island, could potentially be a place of interest, considering that 52% of its population are relocated people, the best insights can be found from the perceptions of the IoM's residents.

What this study highlights is the central importance of first creating a place/environment that matches most of the expectations of its own residents, and then ensuring the correspondence of the respective messages sent out by the IoM government through their website communications. This

way the IoM can retain the current businesses and residents and attract new ones. However the conclusions of this study are limited by a number of factors which will be discussed in section 6.2.

6.1.2 Reflections on the research

Reflecting on the journey I have been through in the course of completing this research, I can confidently say it has been an exceptional learning experience. I felt none of my previous education and work experiences could have prepared me for this journey, in terms of coping with the ups and downs, the setbacks and frustrations, the joys of sometimes small and sometimes significant progress. I discovered that frequently the literature only provided partial answers to my questions and I needed to piece things together to build a more complete picture of the phenomenon under investigation. I also learned that no matter how many times I went down blind alleys, it was important to find my way back to what mattered for this research.

One of the most difficult challenges of this journey was trying to remain objective when analysing and making sense of the data collected. This was particularly in terms of the identification of the codes and categories and in trying to make sense of the story they were telling me. I had to sit back and reflect on what the data revealed to me about the place branding in the IoM. Pulling together what the interviewees said, what was observed from the websites and what the literature says, all led to significant insights into the place branding process as such and more specifically in the IoM.

I did not set out to prove any theories, rather to explore what was happening on the IoM and to try and find out whether there was anything that could help in the process of attracting talent and businesses (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 2005). The sense-making process played a significant role in this research journey, leading to identifying that the dissatisfaction, frustration and the satisfaction of the participants with features of the IoM environment throughout the interview process, very much resonated with the Herzberg's (1966) "Two factor theory". While the literature does not say a lot about Herzberg as an influence in place branding and marketing, the insights gained from the interview data very strongly resonated with the idea of hygiene and motivators factors, as an explanation of what drove these people's satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the IoM, and as a consequence influencing their decision to stay or leave the island.

Also reflecting on people's perceptions about the IoM before relocation, what I came to conclude is that there is no such thing as image gap. If people have no precise image about a place, they will overlay upon this place the image of the closest place to it or bundle it up with neighbouring places. Whether this could be beneficial or not, it is to be discovered. However what this suggests, is the significant importance of a place's own image and reputation.

Whereas the recommendations of this research might provide a contribution for the place brand practitioners in the IoM, this research has provided a significant contribution to my practice as a researcher. The whole process has helped me learn how to challenge my own thinking, how to stop and analyse the various influences from literature and people around me and be aware of the impact that this influence has in my research and my thinking overall.

Writing a doctorate has been a long held ambition I have had since I finished my first master's degree, but beyond my personal growth, I wanted my research to make a contribution (no matter how small) beyond my everyday work to the place I made my home, the community around me where I found myself appreciated and where my children are growing up care free. I very much hope that at least some of the outcomes of this research, for example the adapted "Two factor theory" model, can assist the practitioners in the IoM in their work to create a place branding and marketing strategy that will enhance the image of the IoM as a wonderful place to live and work.

6.2 Limitations

In concluding this research it is important to stress that this study has a number of limitations which are listed below:

1. This is a qualitative case study whose conclusions and recommendations cannot be generalised for other contexts or places.
2. The findings of the research are based only on the perceptions of the research participants, which were a sample of only 15 individuals and as such cannot be considered as representative of the entire business community or the population of the IoM.
3. When comparing and contrasting the IoM identity with IoM brand identity, the process was based only on the themes generated from the analysis of both interviews and websites and there were no quantitative measures of the differences.
4. The focus of the study was the comparison of the research participants' perceptions with the website communications of the DfE only, not the whole of the IoM government's communications.
5. The findings of this research should not be read as evidence against individuals working in the IoM Government or the IoM Government as a whole.
6. Identification of Two-factor Theory for use in place branding was based only on the qualitative data collected through this study. The validity and reliability of this theory, whilst confirmed by Wang and Zhang (2009) in consumer brand selection, cannot be established

by the data available in this study. This would require further research and perhaps quantitative measurements.

7. All the data for the research were collected during 2019 and up to February 2020 and as such the conclusions and recommendations should be interpreted in the context of that time.

6.3 Implications of the research

The findings of this study appear to support the widely held view in the place branding and marketing literature that place branding is not about straplines and advertising, rather making places better for both present and future residents. This study, albeit a small exploratory study, presents a specific case study, this of the IoM, which findings and conclusions might not be able to be replicated as a whole anywhere else, however certain considerations might be similar to other places (perhaps other islands in the British Isles) and the insights from the IoM might be useful to their governing bodies in their place branding process.

The main implications of this research would relate to policy and practice considerations for the IoM government and practitioners. What stemmed from the findings of this research, albeit from a small number of research participants, was not only the importance of sending out messages which reflect people's perceptions about the place, but firstly and most importantly finding out how people really perceive the place and to use these insights to improve places, create policies that enable businesses to operate efficiently and put in place agile processes that help businesses. The best insights for future proofing the place for present and future residents can be gained from the current residents. This main implication leads to another important implication of this research for the IoM government; a better understanding of the place branding as a process can help a better understanding of the implications that place branding has for the country's development strategies.

In terms of theoretical implications, while the application of the "Two-factor Theory" in this study (by classifying the place brand attributes into hygiene attributes and motivators) was conducted only at conceptual level and with data collected from an albeit small sample, further quantitative research could help establish the validity of this theory in place branding research.

Following on the conclusions and implications, a number of practical recommendations were drawn together and will be discussed in the next section.

6.4 Recommendations

Drawing from the literature reviewed and the insights generated from this research, this section is focused on providing a series of practical recommendations which could potentially assist the IoM in the process of attracting businesses and talented workforce.

The main recommendation drawn from the literature and this research is:

Place branding should not be treated as a campaign, rather a strategy to enhance place reputation (Anholt, 2008b) because “a place is its reputation” (Tuan, 1980, p. 6), and reputation is “an enduring perception held... by an individual, group or network” (Balmer, 2001, p. 257). As such “it is the responsibility of the government” to develop strategies which “earn a reputation that is fair; true; powerful; attractive; genuinely useful to their economic, political, and social aims; and honestly reflective of the spirit, the genius, and the will of the people” (Anholt, 2011, p. 4).

There are a number of potential takeaways from this study, which could require different levels of interventions, for example big financial investments, greater cooperation or simple process improvements within government. However, the focus will be in providing pragmatic recommendations for addressing some of the issues raised in this research. The recommendations are looking at things that could make a difference in particular in short and medium terms, whereas in the longer term more profound changes might be required, which the IoM government might need to revisit.

Following the rationale from the Discussion chapter, the application of the Two-factor Theory for the findings, assisted in classifying the IoM’s brand attributes into hygiene attributes and motivators. Following from this classification, the recommendations will focus on the hygiene attributes that have been cause for dissatisfaction for each of the identities (Business identity or Residential identity). Clearly the motivator attributes do not cause dissatisfaction, however this does not make them less important; they are the incentives which increase the probability of businesses and people choosing the IoM. They should be taken into consideration but after the hygiene attributes have been addressed.

Following on from the very aim of the DBA, the main recommendations relate to short to medium term pragmatic suggestions to the IoM government and place branding practitioners. What clearly emerged in the findings and discussion was that, the dissatisfaction with what were earlier identified as the perceived hygiene attributes coincided with a mismatch between government’s promises

about the IoM business environment and respondents' experiences. As a result the recommendations would aim to address the issues identified for these attributes.

One of the issues raised by most of the research participants was the interface with the government, explicitly the lack of understanding of "where to start, who to contact, for what and when". To address this issue would be recommended a series of steps, which do not require big investments, rather adjustment of simple processes as below:

1. Improving processes within government which relate to businesses interface with government:
 - a. Creation of a process flow diagram (or a process map) for setting up businesses or relocating businesses, in order to identify all the contact points or "touch point experiences" (Botschen et al., 2017) with the government, regardless which government department is involved. Once the contact points are identified, ensure that processes are in place and staff are trained to deal with the common scenarios and exceptions. Most importantly, ensure that staff at each contact point are able to give advice on the prior or previous steps in the process.
 - b. This process map to be published either on the website or to be provided at any of the contact points within government
 - c. For people who relocate, a similar diagram, or leaflet should be produced which guides people throughout their relocation process. There is information on the website, however, the way the information is organised is cumbersome. It creates the impression that the information is dumped on the website to tick a box rather than to help. It would be useful if the information clearly spells out things like: where to register for the doctor, useful phone numbers, which schools to contact based on the area, work permit information in simple terms (rather than legal jargon) etcetera.
 - d. It is paramount that government departments work together, not only at the high level of Ministers or Chief Executives, but all the way down to every member of staff. Business people will deal with different government departments at different points, so a clear understanding government wide would make the process of settling in the IoM easier.
 - e. Documentation required for setting up businesses, such as the Companies Act 1931 or registration forms, to be available on line or at government counters, not only through CSPs. Most importantly to be written in a simple language, understandable by everyone who would like to start a business, not only lawyers.

- f. Review the advice given to business people from government staff with regards to the use of CSPs.
- g. Where possible, invest in digitalisation of some of the processes within government such as: business registration processes etcetera.

Another issue raised by participants was the funding. Clearly what is published in the websites did not fully match with the respondents perceptions. The recommendations for this issue would be:

2. Clear funding policy

- a. Firstly improve the communications amongst government departments, in order to be clear what funding schemes are available. This would avoid that different departments try to attract businesses related to their specific area with funding promises, and while businesses have relocated there is nothing in place to help them.

There was a clear mismatch between the funding schemes and some of the businesses attracted, for example there was no funding available for digital businesses set-up such as software licencing etcetera, but there is funding available for these businesses to rent offices or employ staff, when it is clear that most of the start-ups in technology work from home or use third parties online.

- b. Get to know better the types of businesses and individuals targeted in order to match the funding schemes to their needs.

With regards to funding, the respondents raised the concern about the discrimination between local and relocated entrepreneurs. It is clear that it is a good thing to have businesses moving to the IoM, however this benefit is cancelled out if a local business moves off the IoM. Therefore:

- c. For the same type of business offer the same funding support to both local and relocated businesses.

One of the major concerns of both businesses and the government was the overall shortage of the workforce and the quality of the local one. As raised by one of the respondents, there was no information available on the Manx students' destination after graduation. While the IoM government is paying their university fees and trying to attract them back through student fairs, these efforts were perceived a bit haphazard. Therefore the recommendations would be:

- 3. Maintain a database of all Manx students who have gone to study in the UK. Use the database to:

- a. Send a regular bulletin of the vacancies in the IoM in their respective area of study.
- b. Offer incentives for them to return on the island, for example funding of further studies through local providers, various professional qualifications, Masters or Doctorates.
- c. Help facilitate the contact between local businesses and the students.
- d. Organise the Graduate Fairs during times when these students return to Island on holidays possibly close to their graduation time.

As highlighted at the beginning of this section, the recommendations of this research would be clearly more pragmatic short to medium term. However some of the issues raised by the research participants would clearly need consideration in the longer term and would require more profound changes, investments or high level cooperation. Some of these considerations would include:

- 1. Work with financial institutions such as the IoM branches of the UK banks, in order for them to provide the same quality and level services as they do in the UK
- 2. Modernise the legislation and ensure clarity in legal procedures in relation to businesses
- 3. Continue to invest in training and education of the local workforce
- 4. As the leisure and civic amenities of the IoM suit better to families than young and childless people, the targeting for attraction of people and businesses to relocate should focus on young families
- 5. With regards to connectivity of the IoM with the UK and the rest of the world, while the government is investing in Telecommunications, people's movement to/from the Island should be given more consideration. Research (Florida, Mellander, & Holgersson, 2015) has already demonstrated that the movement of people generates twice as much economic output than the movement of goods. The collapse of the airline Flybe left the IoM vulnerable in terms of the flight frequencies to the UK, therefore a careful strategy for the air connectivity, perhaps set up of a public-privately owned airline, could be subject for consideration by the IoM government in the future.

6.5 Contribution of the research

The focus in this section will be in outlining the various contributions that the researcher believes this study could make to theory and practice. It is important to emphasise that all the potential contributions of this study outlined below, particularly in terms of potential theory development, should be considered as essentially tentative in nature because of the relatively small scale and exploratory nature of the study, which was not intended to facilitate theoretical generalisations.

Other limitations that constrain what inferences can be drawn from this study are summarised in the section 6.2. Furthermore, this research is a Doctorate in Business and Administration (DBA) which, as an application oriented research, contributes to knowledge through proposing/developing practical solutions to current organisational problems (Graf, 2020).

This study contributes to the development of on one hand the practical place branding and marketing strategies relevant to the situation facing the IoM, while also arguably contributing to thinking about the notion of place identity, place image and the relationship and the interaction these concepts have with the notion of the place branding. The next two sections elaborate in detail upon the potential contributions that this study offers to knowledge/theory and practice.

6.5.1 Contribution to knowledge

In terms of theory, this research contributes to the field of place branding research by providing an intrinsic case study, the IoM case study, which does not in itself create theory rather, as suggested by Ridder (2017), in conjunction with other case studies in the field of place branding can contribute to future research dedicated to theory building.

Research from Gould and Skinner (2007), Ren and Blichfeldt (2011) proposed consideration of multiple place identities. From the findings of this research, the persistent ambiguity in the perceptions of the respondents looking at the IoM simultaneously as a place for business and as a place of residence fully concurs with the idea that places do not have a single identity rather, similarly to human beings (James, 1890), they exhibit a multitude of identities, each of which are as important and unique to the particular place.

The terms place identity and place attachment have frequently been used interchangeably in the literature of the place branding, however a number of authors (Hernández et al., 2007; Knez, 2005; Lewicka, 2008) insist that they are different, suggesting that people can be attached to the places but not identify with them and vice-versa, people can identify with places but feel no attachment to the places. Findings from this research fully concur with the latter studies. It was evident that for the sample of the relocated respondents while many of them displayed a strong sense of attachment to the IoM, all of them apart from one would not identify themselves with the IoM, thus confirming for this particular sample that place identity and place attachment are different concepts and feeling.

Moreover Hernández et al., (2007) confirm that for non-natives the level of attachment with the place is higher than the identification with the place, implying that the identification with the place happens, but at a later stage than the attachment. Albeit a small sample, this study found little

evidence that the non-natives (or the relocated respondents) would identify themselves with the IoM, in spite of the length of residence. Most of the respondents responses were categorical; they would only identify themselves with their place of birth.

In addition Hernández et al., (2007) and Knez (2005) studies confirm that place attachment is linked to the length of residence. Despite no quantitative measures, a strong sense of attachment was present in all the respondents that have been living in the IoM for 10 years or longer, but only in some of the respondents that have been living on the Island for less than 10 years. Some of the respondents of the latter group were looking for the earliest opportunity to leave the island.

According to Alaux et al. (2015) the identity of a place is a reflection of the place identity of its residents therefore a weak place identity of the residents would suggest a weak identity of the place, and consequently a weak image of the place. A tentative contribution from this research relates to the fact that the findings from this research can only partially support this conclusion due to the small sample size. It was clear that the image of the IoM for the relocated respondents was almost non-existent or very weak, however it can only be speculated whether this weak image is due to a weak identity of the IoM or not. In addition, all of the relocated respondents but one would not identify themselves with the IoM. But again, due to the small sample size it cannot be inferred which proportion of the relocated residents in the IoM would not identify with the IoM. However, in the worst case scenario, this could presumably suggest that the majority of the 52% of the population in the IoM do not identify themselves with the place. The non-identification of the residents with the IoM would suggest a weak identity of the place and consequently serve as potentially one of the explanations of the weak image of the IoM. Important to stress that further quantitative research, with a sample size representative of the IoM residents, would be necessary to establish the validity of the aforementioned claim. At present, this study only offers two pieces of evidence to support the suggestion of Alaux et al. (2015), but due to the sample size is unable to provide a link between the two. Nonetheless, being able to establish a link between the identification of the residents with the place and the place image presents an interesting area of research, which might be taken further in the future.

Alaux et al. (2015) reached their conclusions studying small places with the majority of the residents locally born, thus further research in the IoM, considering the ratio of the local and relocated residents, could contribute in expanding the discussion for defining identity and image of the place in the context of places with high migration levels. With the rise of globalisation and increase in the people's movements, this research suggests that how places' identities are constructed and perceived needs re-examining.

Research from Whisler et al. (2008) and Florida (2002) concluded that young and childless people prefer places with high density population and rich recreational amenities, while people with families tend to settle in areas with lower density population and low levels of crime. This was also found to be the case in the IoM. The evidence from the interviews suggests that the shortage of talent in the IoM was due to Manx students going to the UK for studies and not returning, while young and childless talented people not wanting to relocate to the IoM; the reason being the low density of the population and the lack of recreational amenities. At the same time the IoM was viewed by respondents as the perfect place for families with its great level of safety and great outdoors opportunities for children and adults.

Florida (2002) confirmed that talented people prefer places with high levels of diversity and low barriers to entry, where they “can easily plug in” (p.750). The dissatisfaction of the relocated respondents with the work permit system in the IoM and the lack of an integration process in place to facilitate the process of settling in the IoM, reaffirms Florida's (2002) conclusions and it suggests that the process of attracting talented people does not end with ‘getting people through the door’, but rather requires careful consideration of the settling process.

Alignment of place brand identity (or communicated place image) with place identity improves place reputation (Braun et al., 2018). This research could not establish causality between the alignment/misalignment (of the IoM's brand identities with IoM's identities) and the IoM's image and reputation, despite the findings showing that the image of the IoM was almost non-existent for the relocated respondents, whilst some of the attributes of the IoM's brand identities were aligned with the IoM's identities and some were misaligned.

However, what this study found, albeit from a small sample size, was that the alignment/misalignment of the place brand identity with place identity coincided with satisfaction/dissatisfaction of the respondents with place identity attributes. Considering the limitations derived from the sample size, it could be suggested that the alignment/misalignment of place brand identity with place identity might be one of the potential indicators of the stakeholders' satisfaction/dissatisfaction. However it is important to emphasize that this research did not identify any causality between the two, rather only coincidence. In addition, due to the exploratory nature of this study, no quantitative measures were undertaken to precisely calculate the extent to which satisfaction/dissatisfaction matches the alignment/misalignment between place identity and place brand identity.

One of the contributions of this research relates to the adaptation of the “Two-factor Theory” (Herzberg, 1966) in place branding, as argued in the Discussion chapter. The “Two-factor Theory” was originally designed to explore employee motivations and whilst quite widely employed in organisational studies, it has been utilised only in a few studies in marketing research, specifically in terms of consumer behaviour (Maddox, 1981; van Raaij & Wandwossen, 1978; Wang & Zhang, 2009).

The “Two-factor Theory” model adapted in the Discussion chapter provides a framework (see Figure 37) which contributes to enhancing the understanding of how the combination of various place identity elements/attributes (or the experience of) influence the stakeholders’ satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the place, which in return impacts the stakeholders’ behaviours. Research from Botschen et al. (2017) suggests that positive and negative experiences contribute in developing place brand drivers and impeters, however it does not specify any further the experiences, nor provide any delineation of the brand drivers or impeters. The adaptation of the “Two-factor Theory” could potentially aid in classifying the various place brand attributes into Hygiene factors and Motivators, thus giving a clear indication of how the presence and the quality of each place brand attribute impacts the stakeholders’ satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

A number of critical authors (Aronczyk, 2009; Fan, 2006; Jansen, 2008) have voiced their concerns with regards to the consideration of the place identity as a marketing narrative in the place branding process, in order to facilitate the attraction of external audiences. For them, the place branding process mostly places the focus on fulfilling the expectations of the external audiences, consequently ignoring the needs of the local residents, or favouring certain groups in society and alienating others (Boisen et al., 2011). By aiding the classification of the place brand attributes into hygiene factors and motivators, the adapted “Two-factor Theory” framework proposed by this research, helps to emphasise how different place brand attributes impact different stakeholder groups. This process of analysis brings to the attention of the decision makers the risks of favouring or alienating different stakeholder groups when supporting or rejecting the development of particular place attributes. Whether the adapted model might be used to analyse the current situation of the place attributes, or to evaluate the position in relation to the external audiences, the focus of the model are the place identities, which reflect the perceptions of the different stakeholders, resident in the place.

6.5.2 Practice contribution

A further contribution of this research (albeit from a small sample of research participants) to the practice of place branding in the IoM relates to offering a rationale on the application of the “Two-factor Theory” in branding the IoM (see Chapter 5. Discussion of findings). The use of the Two-factor

theory in classifying the IoM's brand attributes can potentially assist the place brand managers in the IoM in three areas:

- a. A better understanding of the perceived hygiene related features of the place and the motivators, might inform the formulation of place branding strategies (as part of the national strategy).
- b. Based on the insights generated from the evaluation the audience's identities (their expectations) in relation to place identities, it might be possible to formulate more effectively targeted marketing strategies.
- c. By drilling down on the attributes that contribute to placing particular identities in particular quadrants in the perceptual model (see Figure 37), it was evident that the plan of actions would include different levels of intervention in different areas, for example improving the quality of processes within the IoM government, one of the hygiene factors which gave rise to dissatisfaction. Improving processes within the IoM government does not help only the businesses wishing to relocate but all businesses operating in the IoM. At the same time by creating a process flow diagram for starting businesses or relocating to the IoM also helps the government staff in understanding and assisting the needs of their customers.

The issues of how to develop and manage place image are not unique to the IoM because, as many researchers have highlighted, the competition amongst countries for resources nowadays has placed the place image and reputation in the spotlight (Florida, 2002; Porter, 2011; Van Ham, 2002). Similarly place branding initiatives are not a new phenomenon, yet establishing a framework that could be adapted in different contexts appears to be problematic. However the application of "Two-factor Theory" has already been confirmed to cross the disciplinary boundaries (for example from organisational studies to consumer behaviour), therefore its adaptation in place branding could potentially present a tool for the practitioners.

Collectively the above contributions of this study fulfil its aim to identify how an understanding of the relationship between place identity, image and place branding could better inform strategies to enhance the image and reputation of the IoM.

Even though the results of this research cannot be generalised or used in different cultural contexts, perhaps some of the outcomes/ recommendations of this research could potentially contribute to the place branding practices in places of similar size and culture such as other small British Islands.

Post-Script:

At the time of the write up of this research, between March 2020 and November 2020 a lot has happened in the world. COVID 19 has created a worldwide health and economic crisis. However, what this crisis has indicated is the importance of making the places good for their own residents. The hygiene brand attributes identified in this research for the IoM Residential Brand Identity, such as health and social care, education, safety and good living standards were fully aligned with the IoM Residential Identity. The care for the residents and the swift actions of the IoM government combined with the systems already in place, enabled the IoM returning to normality earlier than most of the countries, by the middle of June, after having six consecutive weeks without any reported infection cases and a very low death rate. Crises like COVID 19 suggest that Residential Identity should always take priority, however, other identities should not be neglected as they all in different ways contribute in improving places.

7 References

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8 Appendices

Appendix 1. Interview Protocol

Even though the interviews were unstructured a number of topic, prompts and probing questions were prepared. The questions were not asked exactly as below or not all of them were asked in each interview, rather frequently they were paraphrased to suit the context and flow of the conversation. In some interviews the focus was very narrow, only on very few areas which appeared to be the source of frustration allowing the interviewees to express themselves and not diverting their attention to other areas.

Typical questions:

1. For local residents: - What is the IoM for you?
2. For relocated respondents: What made you come to the IoM?
 - a. Did you know anything about the IoM before relocating?
 - b. Would you identify yourself with the IoM?

For all respondents:

3. How do you find the life in the IoM?
4. How is it running your business from the IoM?
5. How did you find it to start/relocate your business?
6. How is your work/career going?
7. What do you do in your spare time?
8. Do you travel a lot?
9. What do your customers think about your business being located in the IoM?
10. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being in the IoM?
11. Another respondent mentioned XXX. What is your opinion on this?
12. What do you think is different in the IoM?
13. How could this be made better?
14. What do you think about government's plans to XXX?
15. How did you come across to this XXX?
16. What are the things you enjoy the most in the IoM?
17. What are the things that annoy you the most in the IoM?

Appendix 2 Interview transcript

INTERVIEW 3

F: Thanks for coming for my interview and as you were aware about the topic of my doctoral research, I wanted to find out from you, what made you come to the Isle of Man?

I: Ok well it was an interesting story actually because I came to the Isle of Man twice, the first time I came to the Isle of Man I was living and working in XXX and I was contracting, I was working for a company that was doing contract work for a Manx company which involved us coming to the Isle of Man for a couple of weeks and take a couple of weeks off in XXX and come back to the Isle of Man to work again for a couple of weeks so it was a way of resourcing, I suppose IT stuff. The XXX company had a dispute with the Manx company and that relationship broke down and I wanted to leave XXX at that point so I spoke to the owner of the Manx company and I got employed over here. My main reason at that point were, XXX was a small country and you know a big employer has like 5 employees and so the technology I was using, was microsoft access and the Manx company had technology that was going at the banks using microcycle server and they wanted to work on bigger systems with bigger scope so to me it was an opportunity to further my career I suppose it was what happened over there. I came here worked for a couple of years here and after a couple of years moved to the UK, went down to London, my wife moved down with me. I was working with a number of consultancies over there essentially doing consultancy work for companies like Marks&Spencers, Britvic Adeco. I had an opportunity to come back to do a two week engagement to the Manx government which grew from two weeks engagement to two months engagement, to a four month engagement I was commuting from the UK and working over here and after nine months of flying back and forth, my wife got pregnant and we made a decision because of the quality of life over here to leave London and come back to the Isle of Man, so came twice for two different reasons, but it's an interesting story in a way because possibly I would never come here at the first time, I wouldn't come the second time here because we knew the Isle of Man and we knew what to expect a second time and we chose this, was an active decision but It was an amount of serendipity over there also because lots of thing lead to that thing and I may have end up somewhere else.

F: So how long have you been here now?

I: So the first time I came, it was 1999 and 2001 went back to London and came back 2004.

F: so you have been here about 14 years. Have you ever regretted moving to the Isle of Man?

I: There is only one aspect I regret on being on the Isle of Man I think, actually 2 things I'll mention 2 things, one is lack of opportunity, so sometimes you read about exiting things happening in Silicon Valley and London and Portugal and sometimes those things happen, there are things happening in these places that you can't be part of because you're nowhere near that scene. A lot of the work I do is online so I do have access to that kind of potential but it feels very restrictive sometimes and the other side of it that I regret being here is one thing I was particular about XXX, it was a lot of people in a very small place makes it very competitive so everyone is driven to succeed, the Isle of Man doesn't have that same level of pressure, so it's much easier lifestyle it's much more sedate and I'm worried that my kids don't get enough street smarts so when they go off and work in bigger places they wouldn't have been faced with those problems and grown as much to them. I don't know that's a fear I'm making up. It's that lack of hunger. You know unemployment is so low, so I don't really need to work very hard on school I'm going to find a job anyway, kind of attitude that I've seen on people sometimes.

F: Lack of ambition?

I: I think that I could be aware, it's a very male way looking at things, because obviously not having those pressures means that you can focus on other things, you know on growing on doing the right thing, there's other things that came over. Those are the two negatives in my mind you know what I mean. So not much negatives at all because I don't find it boring here. I find it, I'm grateful raising a family, I'm grateful working here, it fits very nicely into my mindset, in my way of living.

F: You said you don't find it boring, in terms of what?

I: he he (laugh)... So again this is why I meant for myself, because if my idea of having fun was going out and spending the night in town and meeting friends and going to shows and bla bla bla, you very quickly run out of things to do over here, but I tend to live a lot of my life online, I tend to have a lot of friends around the world, who I communicate digitally with and in a way those relationships are built regardless of where I am physically, so it's very different type of person to anybody else you know, shall we say, again the things I enjoy are reading and learning and things, that you need quiet and peace to do kind of things so the Isle of Man fits very nicely into that space .

F: And you said that it's a good place for the children, so even though they don't have this kind of challenge?

I: My kids are still young so they don't have that challenge at this point in time, I think my oldest is now 13 and do I expect he would have the challenges, he is finding those challenges in the world he

lives in you know, so I suspect that was an unfounded fear that I had when the kids were young comparing my own childhood I supposed to their childhood, you know what I mean, so I'm not worried about it now. in fact he's got a lot on his plate (laugh), so he's got his own challenges in his own way, you know he's got interpersonal relationships he is building with the people around him, he's got study challenges, he's got other things so even though it's a microcosm I now think that...

F: You're comfortable with this

I: I haven't done anything to address that, its kind addressed itself, you know what I mean? (laugh)

F: Yes. You said you came here to work for the Isle of Man government initially

I: No initially no, it was company call centre software in the banking software. It was a project with government.

F: and now you have your own business right? Or you had it since the beginning?

I: No not from the beginning. So I had a number of arrangements with government but towards the end I started my own company and built myself my company. So initially my company was the convenience thing more than anything else.

F: So, how did you find it to start your own business here?

I: There was a lot to learn.

F: in terms of what?

I: In terms of legislation and in terms of what it means to open a company and in terms of what you need to do. Through my support system I learned those things as well and a friend of mine was an accountant and helped me out but before opening my business I think I under estimated the amount of work that goes into it not from the servicing clients point of view but in terms of you know, being aware of what legislation there is, filling out all the papers, becoming an employer, becoming VAT registered and all the other things, which is one of the nice things about the small business game, that it walks you through those but because I had a permanent contract that was covering a lot of my costs at the time I started my company, I kind didn't need that platform, I discovered things myself rather than going to the course at that time.

F: And running your business from here is it okay, is it easy, is it difficult?

I: Yes I mean there are certain challenges. The challenge you always find in the Isle of Man for example is opening a bank account, there's a lot of paper work around it, and it was really funny I saw that talk advertised last week, agh.. I forgot which bank it was, they were talking to the Chambers of Commerce how you can open your business bank account in as little as 10 days which to me I find it ludicrous because if I was in UK I could open today with an online bank, a revolute for example, rather than having to.., 10 days to me is a really long time and the business space, yet it's been told as if this is really really good, and I have worked with organisations, nonprofit organisations, club like organisations who have spent many man hours dealing with the banks. Having said that the actual government side of things, the registering for a company, registering for VAT as an employer seems quite straight forward as long as you know which process to follow. Following that process and you get what you want and I always had the impression that government can be quiet proactive in those spaces also, and one thing that really surprise me when I came to the Isle of Man is we had a baby and social services got in touch and said look you should be applying for child allowance at this point, it wasn't something we went and instigated it was they came and told us about it which could blew me away. So it feels like very caring society you know, so there's a mechanisms in place to support people also I don't know the same thing happens in other places but I was surprised by that.

F: Do you think it could made a difference if you were running your business somewhere else?

I: Probably, I'm trying to put my finger on what those businesses are, so for example in the UK if you want to setup your own company you can do it online filling a form, pay your 35 quid and you get your paperwork on the post, over here is much more expensive to setup a company on a paper base process lower than an online process so it's a little bit slower. Actually operating the company I don't think it would make a difference, obviously you're going to have different rules, different taxation things whatever on the country you're in, so I'm not going to say the rules here are more onerous than anywhere else I would expect other places to have the same rules also. Again only I'm really familiar with only UK and XXX, but again I had a company when I was in XXX, again it was an accountant that walked me though the process just to run the company and do other things I needed to do. So it's about getting professional advice, because it's really if it's an area you know nothing about then it is going to be a hard thing to do anyway.

F: Do you find that running your business from the Isle of Man, or having a Manx registered company, impacts the perception of your customers for your business?

I: No, never has.

F: So do your customers know that the company is from the Isle of Man?

I: Yes, I'm trying to think... I got, I think the biggest challenge is again not knowing the system so I acquired a client from Canada for example, I wasn't quite clear what the tax rules were, so should I be charging VAT is there any local tax I'm liable for, it was a matter about learning the processes. If I was a Maltese company trading with a Canadian company I'd have to find out that also. I've never had a customer who I engaged with in what I build, when I told them it was Manx they said oh no were not going to deal with you (laugh).

F: In terms of perceptions about the Isle of Man, what would have been their reaction if you said I'm from Isle of Man or my business is running from the Isle of Man?

I: I tend to get two types of reactions, I get the one which state is the Isle of Man in, as in having absolutely no perception where the Isle of Man is at all. And the other side of it you tend to get people asking about the tax situation of the Isle of Man it tend to be very common conversation and when I do mention that I pay no corporate tax for example they want to find out more how could they move their business in the Isle of Man.

F: So does the taxation you think serves as an attraction for these businesses or it's irrelevant?

I: it is an initial talking point and it would be an attractive thing but from a tax point of view you need to have real substance over here, you know to take advantage of tax rules, so you can't just have a company that operates in the UK with all the stuff in the UK, set up the company over here and pass the money through there, it won't work that way it would be seen as tax evasion you know (laugh), so when they actually come to terms of how really would I do this, that kind of works that no I can't really do this

F: so basically you think that the perception that this people have for the Isle of Man is "huh no tax"?

I: I've always seen it from the people that I've spoken as a positive thing. It's one reason to live here, it's one reason to setup your business over here, it's one reason to impact your tax on what you're doing and particularly when you talk on the technologies sphere I do a lot of work for companies in UK for example, I mentioned the client in Canada, so you can be based in the Isle of Man you can be working for companies across the whole world, so it becomes more attractive for the smaller companies or the individuals who are doing remote work. They've gone through a phase of their life where they have moved around, they are digital nomads and they are looking for somewhere to settle, one place is as good as the other. What are the things you are looking for? If you are looking for sun and sea probably Isle of Man is not for you (laugh), but if you are looking for, you know the

most amount of capital where's the place where I can lose as little of that as possible, Isle of Man does come up there as a viable option.

F: when you've been dealing with the government do you find the system sleek, lean or do you find it slow?

I: so unfortunately my own view is going to be biased, not because part of the systems are something I have built (laugh), but because after spending 14 years in government you tend to know the systems and you tend to know the people behind the systems so I find it very sleek, I find it very effective but it is because I know what processes to use and when to use them and if I don't know how, I know who to ask, so I cannot tell you how it's like for somebody just landing in the Isle of Man and trying to discover what to do, you know what I mean? So when I go to the process where I need to setup my own company I knew people in the tax office who I could speak to, because I had delivered assistance for them, when I came to doing VAT somebody that I knew in the VAT office who I could speak to, who could give me advice on what I needed to do, that's why I meant by biased because normal people who don't have access to these kind resources... yes to me it's very sleek and very effective (laugh).

F: So do you think it's a bit depends who you know?

I: yes there is a bit of that also. Again one place that could draw comparisons is the UK for example. UK is been pushing more and more systems online. The Isle of Man had been making a huge amount of headway in that space but not at the speed that UK has. So for example in the UK the company registration can be done online in the evening, pay online and you're done, so there's no paperwork no to wait a week for somebody processes for me. So it's much more effective on that side. Tax and VAT I would say are en par, again there is always that challenge of being in the outskirts of the UK and not being quite in the UK, so for example the UK has started putting systems in place for example like need some sort of identity verification of who you are and in order to do that you walk into the post office and they verify who you are but there is no UK post office in the Isle of Man, so you can't make use of those systems because we're kind of excluded. The reality is that we're not part of the UK so we should be treated as separate, and sometimes not understanding that is where people would be struggle a bit you know.

F: Your business, is it at the stage where you can employ people or you'd rather keep it?

I: yes I had employed someone in the past and I had employed students over summer also. At this point of time because the level of work I have, I don't have anyone employed just myself and my wife are the two employees of the company but I'm setup as employer in other word.

F: My question would be, did you find it easy or difficult to find staff?

I: The person I employed had been very much serendipity again, he was looking for a role I gave him a try, he was better than I expected so I kept him on essentially. Because of the nature of my work I don't go out and seek people to scale what I'm doing its very much dependent on what my clients need and wants and if I need to scale myself, I will use other contractors around the world also rather than employing people because I tend to work very much on project basis rather than having a steady stream of work. So my concern there would be if I hire someone and I can give them work for six months what do I do for the six months after that. It's the nature of the work you know, I have to get an ongoing contract for example that needed 5 people to do than I would go look for people, I just haven't that kind of opportunity.

F: You've been living here for about 18 years now on and off, do you feel yourself as part of the place?

I: I do feel.

F: How do you feel about the place?

I: yes. I love the Isle of Man. I have this funny thing I get when I go back to XXX. The airport in XXX is on top of a hill, and as soon as the car is on top of the hill what you see is a sea of built up areas. That's the point where I want to come back home.

F: Back home? So where is home?

I: So here is home. That's when I realize that here is home. Just to give you an idea XXX is half the size of the Isle of Man in terms of land area with half a million people living on it. It is much more crowd much more cramped, obviously much more competitive much more opportunity but very few green spaces, here you can go for a walk, walk for an hour and not seen anyone, you know, that's what I love about it. I love that being able to lose myself in my surrounding and a green environment and again greenery is something in XXX we used to read a lot of Enid Blyton, you read about leaves falling of the trees and heather and bracken. You never had any of that in XXX, snow or ice or frost on the ground, so in a way I'm living the childhood I had read about. So there's a lot of soft reasons I'm here, but that made me like the place over here rather than hard and fast business, employment

etc. etc.. I think we are lucky enough at this point, that financially the company goes really well that's great if the company doesn't go well that's fine also you know, because of the age of my kids I'm choosing to spend more time with them rather than focusing in the business and it's nice to be able to have that balance. If I'd setup a business in London I wouldn't expect to have that kind of life quality. When I worked in London it was get to the office at 8 and leave the office obviously at 8 in the evening that's fine because there are other people there also than an hour train to get back home that wasn't uncommon. It was great while I didn't have kids but here it makes a lot easier to spend that family quality time you know, when the kids leaves go off to university will see.

F: So basically you feel yourself as settled here,

I: Yes

F: Would you move? Would you go somewhere else?

I: Would I move somewhere else? Possibly, possibly. As I said because the fact that a lot of relations I have are online and digital and again I'm still friends with a number of people in XXX through facebook and through keeping in touch so if I have to move here I can still maintain my relationships that are important to me. It would have to be a lot, a big thing to move me so I'm not going to say I'll never move because that's not a type of person I am. So let's say for example my three kids decided to move to Sweden for their education for example and I find a job in Sweden and I would be close to them, that might happen but as I said I think of the Isle of Man as home so if that had to happen, I'd want to come back home to some point that's really weird thinking about it that way so I could see myself moving away for a period but wanting to come back here.

F: In another interview, somebody mentioned that there's a different treatment between Manx and non-Manx. Wherever you deal with people for example, in government or other people you meet around the Isle of Man, do you see any difference between the way that they treat the Manx and the non-Manx, sort of have you felt they are treating me like this because I'm not Manx here and if I were Manx I would have more advantages?

I: I've not seen it that way but I've seen number of people treated that way and don't know if that is because of the length of time I've been here, the way I've engrained myself, doing things like activities for example has made me part of the fabric in a way, but I do know people who are here do not mix with the people around them so that kind of get excluded but because that's part of their behaviour rather than society's behaviour. I think because of the fact that the pure Manx group is smaller than you'd find in other countries so let's say you went to Dubai for example you would have

an expat community that's really tiny and very closely knit. Over here there's a lots of people who come through the Isle of Man or come from other places so I suspect society is geared more towards having the people working together rather than being excluded, I think so, haven't really felt it. I have sort of glimpsed it when I see networks of people who know each other because they went to school with each other you know, so you can kind of understand that but I've never been excluded for anything because I wasn't in there. But you can kind of see those links grow up because people who grew up together tend to be closer to each other and I suspect that's where that comes from rather than to be explicit that there's a foreigner and I'm not going to speak to him.

F: I don't know if you are aware that government has made some plans to increase the population, how do you feel about it?

I: I think that would be a fantastic idea. I feel that the things at most people complain about things, the most of people complain most in the Isle of Man, cost of travel, availability of travel, cost of telecoms, cost of going out to eat all those things if we have doubled the population those problems will go away because it's an economies of scales thing. If you're running a restaurant and your restaurant has 10 people in it every night as opposed as running the same restaurant to the same amount of staff and having 20 people in there every night your cost bases are different, if you look at flights, the choice of flights and the costs of flights it's very much driven by how big the market is, if would have a bigger market than would be more carriers coming here and have more competition, so things like open skies policy for example opening up the market for airlines, if we have a perfect market here that would have been perfect. The fact that we have an imperfect market and is very small scaled market is what drives the inefficiencies in that space, so I really think if we have more people, again the ships that go off from over here if they have more people than they needed to take than that would be more frequency of sailings. If you look at the cost of infrastructure that Manx telecom puts into radio mast are, if we have doubled the population they will still need exactly the same cost for infrastructure than it would be distributed in more people so that is my perception of it that is mine view of it

F: and would not impact you think... because you said that when you go to XXX...

I: compare here to XXX doubling the population over here is still be a fraction of what XXX has. XXX has 500.000 people and the land area half of the Isle of Man, so if we increase from 70.000 to 145.000 that's a drop in the ocean (laugh)

F: that's fine so

I: we do have if you look at the real estate market for example it's very inefficient because it's very few people moving and I suspect that has been a drop of the population rather than an increase of the population which is just making these things more pronounced

F: and you just mentioned the airlines, how do you find the access to the Isle of Man, do you have to travel a lot?

I: I do every now and again, yes and it can be a bit frustrating but coming from XXX it doesn't feel that bad because from XXX you have to fly to Italy really or you have to fly to the UK if you want to get long haul flights for example and they recently I had to go to Edinburgh. I flew to Manchester and it was a very very efficient flight. So we are serviced by three or four different airlines for the moment and I do recognize that there's demand base at the end of the day that was a fantastic flight that went to Gatwick at midday every... I don't know how often and it was a perfect flight but every time I was in the flight I have only three other passengers with me on it, I knew it wasn't going to be there for very long it's not effective for that airline to keep running that, I'm a big believer in markets.

F: well yeah, the Isle of Man used to have an airline that had so many flights operating much more than what's operating now and that is something of the past

I: different era, what is interesting to observe is what happens with the ferry now that government has taken it over

F: What do you think about it?

I: what would be fun would be to do, passenger survey now and a passenger survey in two years time, because everyone expects it to be "uh hoo cost will be cheaper now that government will be running it" and discount for residents, somebody still needs to pay services and because we have so few people over here it's still going to be a big cost.

F: well if you look at it like this, Guernsey government subsidises their airline

I: Okay but that money is coming from taxation, where is that money coming from?

F: from the government

I: yes but the government revenue comes from tax

F: so yes comes from tax

I: so what you're doing is just spreading the load rather than ...

F: the way it goes in Guernsey, they keep that airline so that the Island never loses its links with whatever, London, they fly mostly to London, to Manchester so try to run it efficiently but if the worst comes to worst government subsidises the airline. While here the government took over the Steam Packet, do you think this makes a difference as such or?

I: I don't know I suspect that people are going to be disappointed because I suspect that they think that the government will take it over so the fares will drop, and if those fares are realistic okay they might be partly monopolistic so they might be a bit higher but at the end of the day if somebody's needs to pay for that, the running and the staffing and you know, you start cutting away somethings, now what worries me is if you had a company before there is an expert that knew what was doing and you got this well-meaning people stepping in, are they going to be able to run it just like efficiently, so I worry a bit but I'm quite an easy going guy, so...

F: well is anything else that has sort of impressed you with the Isle of Man or you find it disappointing for being here?

I: Disappointing...I can't think of anything that I'd say disappointing because again I tend to rationalise for a lot of about things, so I tend to see that, if you go to villa gaiety you know every now and again that it's an amateur production but it is really really good I'm happy in that. If I wanted to go to the theater every weekend and watch something different I would have been disappointed but that's not my thing as I said most of my... I tend to use my digital world a lot and in a way I could be in an igloo in the middle of Iceland and still be happy.

F: and what about your family? Do you think they're happy here or your overall perception?

I: my kids don't know any better so that's fine, I think my wife found it more stressful when she didn't work when she was raising kids and not working, the social surrounding she had around her were very restrictive and the same people you meet over and over again and that become less important to her now that she's working. Just too tired now with the kids and work to worry about that anymore. But I think the big problem areas would be you know if you are talking 20 year olds and 30 year olds, who want more active social life we just not in that space at the moment, don't know if we'll get back to that you know (laugh). The Isle of Man is great because if want to pursue your own interests you can but if you haven't reach that stage when you have own interests and you want to develop yourself than it's not the right fit. I suspect the reason I mentioned be careful what you read online because there is a very skewed view because of the PR agencies that represents the Isle of

Man puts stuff online, I think there is a misconception sometimes that this is a perfect place and everybody wants to come here and asked why they want to moved my business in the Isle of Man and the answer that people sometimes give is because it's a nice place with nice people, or we think it's the best place in the world. People don't share that same kind of view. You know there is a bit of a blinkered mentality I suppose, or living in a bubble I suppose sometimes where you are hearing the same rhetoric back at you, so ... I like bubbles (laugh).

F: so are you part of this bubble?

I: I'm sure I am, so for example take the programing club, the fact I created the club is because there's nothing in that space and it was a great experience for me because I learned so much about dealing with people, I learned so much about, you can set an objective on your mind and deliver it, there are very few barriers to make it happen but you yourself those kind of rhetoric. So I suppose I am part of that bubble but being able to be part of the bubble had been more of a positive to me than a negative because I could create something because I could learn and grow through doing that I feel that's a good thing.

F: so if you talk about that bubble, is that community bubble or is it the overall life in the Isle of Man

I: I don't know suspect this life in the Isle of Man and I supposed the best way to realise that is when you go and spend a few days somewhere else, move to London for a few days for example, I think there are things you miss and there things you don't miss, but I always find I want to come back because it's too chaotic, there's a lot of stuff happening, to get back to my little safe place (laugh), which doesn't fit, it's just a lifestyle thing rather than you know trying to drive business from the Isle of Man needs a completely different proposition, so our proposition is either look we're a hive of activity, or a great space to come and have a holiday, which are we? And I don't think there's a clear message around that

F: so which one do you think we are?

I: I'm not saying a hive activity on the business side of things, having said that you do work on R&D for example, being able to come for a quiet space and do your own thinking and do your own building you know away from the noise and everything else and then take a product to market, the Isle of Man can be a great place for you. I think there is... that's the market we should be looking at, you know having an R&D community rather than a production community I suppose, but then education

feeds into that because we need to have the right people on the right places with the right skills, you know?

F: so you just mentioned that education in a sense...

I: sometime education is a bit of an afterthought rather than something we go out to pursue as the Isle of Man. Now I don't know whether because I'm coming here with a different background in XXX there is a university and if you don't go to university you're not going to get a good job, the rhetoric over here is people don't need to go to university because they can still get a job, and I think that's the wrong attitude, people need to strive to be the best of they can, be rather than satisfied themselves with what they could be. Don't get me wrong there are problems with that university also because doing it and failing and be quite detrimental or there was I case when I left XXX where there were 14 new pharmacists graduated from university. Where are they going to find the job? There's no way for them to go, but I really feel that university is a leapfrog, diving board (mean spring board) to other things... the biggest argument I had in the Isle of Man was with somebody in Chamber Commerce he was saying what we doing people to go off to university because they never come back, well do you really want to keep your people here and not educate them so they don't come back is that what you saying, that's you're measuring yourself with the wrong thing. So in a way I'm really happy that UCM are doing what they're doing, we should be doing more of that (laugh)

F: And as far as education of your children, how do you see it here? Cause you just said that education looks like an afterthought.

I: they are being educated, getting a private education, I think the government schools do a good enough job but the biggest issue I've seen with the secondary schools, is they trying to dissuade students from going off to university, is the wrong thing to do in my opinion, I've seen that. I've seen that from career advisers and lets if we can get with this kids working so they can see what working is like so they maybe they would not go off to university which is completely counter intuitive, and that's the worst thing you can do to your economy not educating people. While in XXX I would say around 50-60 % of kids will go to university because there is one locally, which is great and you get stipend from government would go to university to support you to university so you do end up with a general population with a better level of education. They're more mature about their problems now and how they deal with them, and that's why XXX is kicking up. Cause in a way you export people like that you know if you think about it over all what good are you creating, even there aren't the jobs for the people coming out there's job all across the world that those people could do, so not giving kids an education to me is criminal, that's my view anyway.

F: that's very important I think too

I: so the other side of that is not everybody has the right minds to get a degree you know and before I came to the Isle of Man wasn't something I ever thought about, why would you not go to university, the opportunity is there, you know and again I was surrounded by people who went to university with me so you kind of end up in that mindset, but if everyone has a degree than whose going to do the menial jobs, whose going to become a carpenter, whose going to become a plumber than you look around and says plumbers and carpenters are the most highly paid in the Isle of Man, together with the bus drivers, postman... (laugh) and I don't know if that goes back to that lack of a hunger to do things because if you do look at postman getting paid more than university lecturers are than why would you go to university, but how would you develop yourself as an individual if education isn't seen like something important. So kind of shifted the way from business focus to education focus, but

F: yes but this is what this place is and we talk about business or we talk about education that's fine they link and they feed into one another and that's very important and I'd love to hear that, so don't hold yourself back in that. If you would have gone off track I would have found the way ...

I: push you back...

F: but no, it is very important so, please carry on

I: to me the whole proposition how do we get more people coming here is the education focus is something we can do really well, because you looking at a hundred students in here as being a success, if we had 300 students in here instead this place can accommodate that, we have the teachers who can do that why not? So there's no additional cost to have those bigger classes, but the knock on effect to the whole economy would be massive

F: and you're thinking these students local or coming from outside

I: even bringing them from outside, part of the attraction of going to university is being challenged by the people around you, and whether those people are born the same place you were or somewhere else without that challenge it's very easy to become complacent, yes I got a degree I sat in all my classes and my exams but what debates did you have, how were you challenged? Or how did you grow through doing that, and the richer the people the environment you're in the more effective that is, if we turned it into a..., we can offer courses for people to come and study here

instead and turn it into a... reducing the costs that way you know whatever that is but then every university is trying to do that.

F: you just mentioned this thing complacent and talking to somebody else in another interview it came up, do you think overall people are sort of complacent here if you look at let say, the other person mentioned electrician, carpenters, you have to wait for month...

I: I think yes, I think we are complacent and I suspect part of that complacency is half down to the people that are around because when I came to the Isle of Man the biggest thing I noticed was difference in culture, so in XXX you have a hugely populated centre, I was working with somebody who opened a shop which sells subs, basically a baguette and we built a services for him to do it online, it was so old, old days, he didn't have any email so when order came online we could send him a fax kind of thing and what happened, this was the first person in XXX to open a sub shop within two months there were another three places doing exactly the same thing, in the Isle of Man the culture is completely different. If somebody tries to do something new and open a shop to sell subs, most people go arghh it will never work, rather than try to copy his business and do one better than him, it's more of that arghhh I couldn't be bothered with that, and I don't know if that's a culture thing, I don't know if that's a British thing comparing to a Mediterranean thing, but in my mind XXX doesn't feel aggressive XXX feels the way it should be because the market regulates itself while over here maybe because it's an imperfect market or...

F: you mean people are a bit complacent.

I: complacent is the best word I can think of, you know that boils back to that fear I had of my kids growing up without that ambition I suppose while there in XXX they'd completely different people who knows? But they're happy, that's the important thing

F: that's the important thing they are happy, so is anything else you'd like to add?

I: well was that useful?

F: very useful, very very useful, everything is very useful indeed, that's all what I needed, so thank you very much.

Appendix 3 Sample of interview coding

Code: Difficulties to find staff

<Files\\Interview 2> - § 4 references coded [5.97% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.78% Coverage

they staff up their offices whenever they can rather than staffing them here because it's very difficult to find good staff here. There are a number of different companies in the Island that can be much larger than they are that simply because they can't find staff so they stopped trying, so that they can't increase the size of their offices

Reference 2 - 0.50% Coverage

F: you think the reason they can't find staff is simply that people don't want to come here?

I: Yes

Reference 3 - 2.00% Coverage

I mean for the sort of jobs people will be hired for here, they can go to London and do this, Dublin or some place where they can have a bit more of a life. The people who do come here are the people who have small kids and try to raise them in safety and that's really good benefit of the Island but if you don't it's hard to bring single people here and keep them here for instance.

Reference 4 - 1.68% Coverage

I mean when recruiting a position one of the questions I've been asked for would be – are you going to make me move to the Isle of Man? – I got that even last week and the answer that I have to give is NO we won't make you move here but if you want to that's great, and we help facilitate that. They don't want to move here

<Files\\Interview 5> - § 2 references coded [2.84% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.97% Coverage

Have try it for a long time. You had to jump through the hoops. You had to you had to advertise locally, I remember a top job, girl turned up and said okay, fine, you know, top thing it says on the, you know, manx worker, right, you know, that's the main main thing you know the name not the

qualifications you know I don't need a work permit okay good yeah Anything else? Yeah well I can't do it for that salary don't worry maybe we might do some more yeah no need out the coming back house I need a parking space any? Nah, man sorry in that case no no job for you can't go on and get somebody who needs a work permit. You know? You know, so I don't know I don't see any people that try and hire people here.

Reference 2 - 1.86% Coverage

I don't know, Getting people to move here is obviously quite difficult. Governments doing some kind of relocation thing or whatever, but there's always a percentage of this that and the other which means to bring costs down rather than eliminating them. Okay. Which isn't necessarily, you know, it's bit like I was saying before about the...the tax cap, you know, sometimes it's not the actual thing. It's the message or the marketing message behind it? Say, you know, 99 or 100,000? Sounds so much less than 125 (*means thousands – tax cap in the IoM is £125k*). Right? And it's the same thing here, right? You'd much rather be saying, we're going to pay the relocation costs for the first thousand people every year than saying we're going to pay, you know, 50% or 70% or 30%, or whatever it is of the relocation costs for anybody, you know, there's no there's no goal. There's no high score, there's no achievement. Right? You know, if you said, our goal is thousand people a year we're going to do this, you know, then it's a wonderful update as we've got 460 people already interested, it's only March. You know, hurry up, you know, that's the way I would pitch it, but that's, that's missing. I say there's, there's a quite a bit of attention on people moving here at the beginning but there's no let's get, you know, let's invite you know come-overs to a drink thing to learn what they like or think.

<Files\\Interview 6> - § 1 reference coded [4.02% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 4.02% Coverage

But as a Manxman I'm starting a new business here, I've always said I want the Manx to get first what's the word, the first choice, but I prefer to teach them first, new skills in animation for example, yeah? To give them a chance to work in the creative sector. But sure enough if the skills aren't here, like that animation company that has moved over here, yes they were able to fill they're advertising for 13 jobs and they were able to fill 8 of them for office work, but they couldn't get any animators because they are not here so they'll have to bring them over. But I'm hoping that with starting the studio I can train them and therefore if another animation company moves over here they will have them. Here, yeah that seems to be the rerun in the business plan, this business the studio or the production company that I'm going to be doing is going to employ 30 and the government insisted that 6 of them came from off island. So that's 20% , and they are happy with that.

<Files\\Interview10> - § 2 references coded [0.39% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.17% Coverage

And I think the Isle Man probably has trouble because of its image and stuff, recruiting high calibre people to fill those roles.

Reference 2 - 0.22% Coverage

Well, I mean, if they pay in the right amount of money, they'll get the people but they, I mean, I don't think is actually just money because it's the environment isn't it?

<Files\\Interview13> - § 1 reference coded [5.95% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 5.95% Coverage

No, I don't think so. I think personally, I think the biggest problem is that 50% maybe more than that now of the bright kids. So basically, every year of school 50, 60, 70% of them leave the Isle man to go to university. So your brightest and best all disappear. And the ones that are left behind are getting jobs, if I'm honest, that are way above what they would get in the UK with the same qualifications and the same level of skills. And you know, I've seen and some of my family members as well you like, you get paid what for doing what and you've got two and a half GCSE Jesus Christ. Like, you know, like, I'll be honest, you know, like Things like that there's, there's more opportunities for those people who stay behind. But equally, you can see that they would be far, far threatened if every graduate from the Isle of Man suddenly came back to the Isle of Man. And I think there is an imbalance there that does affect employers, because the quality of the staff that you can get is potluck. And it's more likely to be not what you want. And you take the best of a bad bunch than, you know, the stellar employee and you've got 10 great people to pick from and, you know, that's just for us, let's say admin and accountancy and the business support functions. Specialist technical skills almost certainly going to have to come from the UK because there's just not the pool of people here yet. Science in particular, with you know, we're going to have to hire from the UK. And the problem. You know, that the senior level, you know, because level PhDs and things like that this, you know, I know a couple of Manx PhDs, but that doesn't mean they, they can they can do what we're doing so let you know if I know another computational biologist who's an assistant professor at Ulster University. He was about as Manx as you can get. And but even he would struggle to do what we're doing here, because just science be getting narrower and narrower. Go forward. So and yeah, I think there's an issue in there. You know, it's me speaking very bluntly in the quality of staff on the Isle of

Man is pretty poor. And so the, the educational, maybe not the educational side of it, but their work skills. Yeah. The ability to know what it takes to impress an employer. Like the number of people that even new graduates that you see and they do not know how to work in a workplace. They don't know how to come in, organize themselves, do the job and progress in the sense they're just kind of like come in and sit down and listen on the phone just waiting for somebody to tell them what to do for their job that day. Hang on,. Like this case of a graduate with your degree and you know, it's really, really strange.

<Files\\Interview15> - § 2 references coded [3.19% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.58% Coverage

We've had to bring people across, have been willing to work here because of the technical skills, they're just not available on the island. We could spend years training people up to meet our standards and be able to work in the sector. But that's not cost effective. So it's cheaper to bring somebody over and have somebody who's already skilled in the skills that we need and use their, their skills for our business.

Reference 2 - 1.61% Coverage

Because we can only bring people in when we need them. And obviously they've got their own homes. In the UK. Normally, you'll bring people on you for, let's say short periods, yes projects, or you bring people to relocate here. They won't relocate here. Because we have to buy in the services, their services, to help us out when we can't provide. We haven't got the staff to be able to provide the services that are needed.

Appendix 4 Sample of website text coding

Code: Telecom services are great

<Files\\dfe 2> - § 2 references coded [3.73% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.39% Coverage

with advanced infrastructure...

Reference 2 - 3.34% Coverage

ADVANCED INFRASTRUCTURE

The Isle of Man has world-class connectivity with an excellent telecoms and power infrastructure which has benefited from hundreds of millions of pounds worth of public and private sector investment in recent years.

<Files\\digital iom homepage> - § 5 references coded [13.75% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.35% Coverage

The Island has an advanced telecommunications infrastructure with cutting-edge fixed and mobile telecoms networks and highly resilient bandwidth connectivity delivered through outstanding data centres offering gaming specific expertise and industry leading DDOS mitigation solutions.

Reference 2 - 0.44% Coverage

- A world-class power network and telecoms infrastructure, including six top-tier datacentres.

Reference 3 - 1.54% Coverage

The Isle of Man has a thriving digital economy which accounts for around 30% of the Island's economy. The foundations for this success have been the Island's world-class and highly resilient telecoms and electricity infrastructure and its network of new data hosting centres which incorporate disaster recovery facilities.

Reference 4 - 8.73% Coverage

One of the Isle of Man's key strengths is its world-class telecommunications infrastructure. The Island has an advanced and diverse telecommunications network providing fixed-line voice and broadband services and two 4G mobile networks. The Island's [National Telecoms Strategy](#) was released in October 2018, with a vision that the Isle of Man will be recognised as being at the forefront of telecoms innovation.

Carrier class connectivity to and from the Isle of Man is provided via five discrete fibre cables which allow the creation of high bandwidth fibre optic rings connecting the Island with the North of England and Ireland. These links can employ 'self-healing' technology which guarantees that if a fault occurs at any part of the link, voice and data traffic is seamlessly re-routed in the other direction. Similar resilient ring technology is also used for the Island's internal delivery networks.

- 99% 4G and 75% 4G+ coverage
- 5 x Subsea cables
- 6 x Tier 3, ISO accredited Data Centres

Reference 5 - 1.69% Coverage

The Isle of Man has a world-class telecommunications infrastructure that caters for the full range of voice and data communication requirements of both residents and businesses. We also have a highly stable, self-generated power supply with the ability to generate 70% more electricity at peak demand; ensuring the lights stay on for digital businesses.

<Files\\digitaliomnews2> - § 4 references coded [1.58% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.08% Coverage

Digital matters: the National Telecoms Strategy

Reference 2 - 0.22% Coverage

Island could continue to develop and implement telecoms infrastructure which meets the needs of both business and residents alike.

Reference 3 - 0.52% Coverage

- The Island has exceptional mobile coverage and two excellent mobile operators, both of whom are willing to trial emerging technologies.

- With several datacentres and reliable connectivity to UK Cloud providers, IoT deployments on the Island have several options to store and analyse their volumes of data.

Reference 4 - 0.76% Coverage

In addition to its investment in Trak365, Vannin Ventures - which is part of the Manx Telecom group of companies - is also in the process of developing an IoT test bed on the Isle of Man, which will be used to showcase and support Trak365 and other, future IoT technology partners. The Isle of Man is uniquely well-positioned to offer this inviting 'proof of concept' environment and Vannin Ventures is committed to supporting its development.

<Files\\digitaliomnews4> - § 1 reference coded [1.02% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.02% Coverage

The Island is already well served by two full-service telecoms companies, providing fixed line, mobile and 4G data services to residential customers and corporate customers, along with other Island businesses who provide a range of services such as data centres, cloud solutions, international connectivity and private circuits. We will continue to encourage investment in their infrastructure and product offerings to help achieve the Government's vision: that the Isle of Man becomes a truly tech-enabled Island with digital commerce, data centres, fintech and digital health services all delivered over a fast, reliable telecoms infrastructure.

<Files\\finance iom> - § 1 reference coded [0.01% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.01% Coverage

- Highly developed telecoms infrastructure

<Files\\locate 5 living in iom> - § 1 reference coded [0.28% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.28% Coverage

While the Isle of Man may be sat in the middle of the Irish Sea, it does not suffer from being out of the loop! We have extensive broadband throughout the Island and a number of wi-fi hotspots.

Appendix 5 Sample of website text theme generation

Codes	Categories	Higher categories	Theme
£50m Enterprise Development Scheme	funding schemes available		
Financial assistance schemes			
Investment on media			
support for the IoM Film Festival			
helping digital businesses			
funding for ultra fast telecom	investments in telecom	investments and financial support	
funding new undersea infrastructure			
Relocation assistance funds	Relocation incentives for staff		
National insurance break			
Final salary scheme for nurses			
Parliament approves National Telecoms Strategy	political support for telecoms		
Launch of Business Connex	political support for businesses		
Support from IoM GSC (gambling supervision commission)	political support for egaming	political support	
Chief Minister in egaming panel			
IoM Gov attend egaming fair			
Government commitment to egaming			
Digital IoM welcomes egaming companies			
Digital IoM to create right environment for egaming			
Government creates Blockchain team			
White label and licencing offer	licencing for egaming		
Set up of licening process for egaming			
Digital Creation assistance guidelines		legal frameworks	
modernisation of current telecom legislation	telecom legislation		
new Guidelines for broadband advertising			
pragmatic taxation			
simple taxation with many advantages	taxation	taxation benefits	
low personal tax			
no corporate or capital gains tax			
income tax cap			
no inheritance tax			

Appendix 6 Sample of website image theme generation

Website	Objects	Arrangements	Context/background	Image Theme	Category theme	High level subtheme
https://www.iomdfenterprise.im/case-study/	man and woman smiling	people in front	van with logo	testimonials small business support		
https://www.iomdfenterprise.im/case-study/	van with logo	van centre of image	hills view	testimonials small business support		
https://www.iomdfenterprise.im/case-study/	children and child carers holding book	together	floor	support for childcare and nursery		
https://www.iomdfenterprise.im/case-study/	smiling woman, gym top, gymnastic rings	woman in centre	white wall	small business support		
https://www.iomdfenterprise.im/case-study/	lightbulb, green leaves, coins	centre	fuzzy green background	support for green businesses		
https://www.iomdfenterprise.im/case-study/	man in suit smiling	centre	computerised panel	support for production industry		
omdfenterprise.im/financial-support/funding	man with 2 ladies having coffee at a table	round the table	other people	business support, production		
https://www.iomdfenterprise.im/case-study/	1 man 2 women holding frame	people in front	office window with blinds	business support, care home		
https://www.iomdfenterprise.im/case-study/	1 man 3 women holding frame	people in front	office window with blinds	business support, care home		
https://www.iomdfenterprise.im/case-study/	man in suit smiling	man in front	electronic device	business support, engineering	Financial support	
https://www.iomdfenterprise.im/case-study/	man in suit smiling	man in front	factory setting	business support, engineering		
https://www.iomdfenterprise.im/case-study/	Man, front door, green plant	in front of the front door	grey sky	business support, hotels		
https://www.iomdfenterprise.im/case-study/	business man in suit	man in front	office wall, window	business support, travel		
https://www.businessisleofman.com/	builders	working on the site, showing	building site	construction industry support		
https://www.iomdfenterprise.im/case-study/	laptop hands		desks	support for cybersecurity		
https://www.iomdfenterprise.im/news/archives	usb, fibres	centre	computer circuit	investing in telecoms		The supportive role of IoM Government to businesses
https://www.digitalisleofman.com/news/	iom map with telecom network		black	telecom support		
https://www.digitalisleofman.com/news/	mobile with wave	centre		telecom support		
https://www.digitalisleofman.com/news/	modified maslow's hierarchy with wifi and battery	centre		telecom support		
https://www.digitalisleofman.com/news/	robot	centre	fuzzy green	support for technology		
https://www.businessisleofman.com/	tech image			support for technology		
https://www.businessisleofman.com/	construction helmet	centre	fuzzy building in construction	Set up of Construction Industry rep. body		
https://www.iomdfenterprise.im/news/archives	smiling people, plastic cup	people holding cups	sunny day	gov schemes for quality recognition	Legal regulatory support	
https://www.digitalisleofman.com/blockchain	desk with laptop ipad phone coffee	young people around	desk office	support for regulating blockchain		
https://www.locate.im/relocating/destination	money bills and coins	front	fuzzy desk	tax support	taxation	
https://www.locate.im/relocating/visa-and-in	young couple smiling, cardboard boxes	sitting on the floor	empty room	support for tech people relocating	staff relocation support	
https://www.locate.im/relocating/visa-and-in	laptop, two screens, man with glasses	man in centre	room	support for tech people relocating		
https://www.digitalisleofman.com/news/	head of digital portrait	centre	physics image	support for technology		
https://www.digitalisleofman.com/news/	4 people at a desk	image taken from above	desk, floor	Setting up services to support blockchain		
https://www.digitalisleofman.com/news/	staff portrait	centre	grey, agency logo	Staff supporting Digital companies	Support services	
https://www.digitalisleofman.com/news/	staff portrait	centre	grey, agency logo	Staff supporting Digital companies		
https://www.businessisleofman.com/	woman and laptop	sitting at a desk	desks in a white room	Business Connex support		

Appendix 7. Example of Alignment

Example of Alignment between respondents' perceptions and messages in the website

Interviews	Websites
<p>Interviewee 2: "the company originated somewhere else, but then they setup the business here, I think for the tax reasons"</p> <p>Interviewee 3: "when I do mention that I pay no corporate tax for example they want to find out more how could they move their business in the Isle of Man"; "if you are looking for, you know, the most amount of capital, where's the place where I can lose as little of that as possible, Isle of Man does come up there as a valuable option."</p> <p>Interviewee 4: "I know numerous anecdotal stories of people who have moved here, why? Because of the fiscal reasons"</p> <p>Interviewee 5: "it's a nice thing to say to investors. I think the personal tax situation here is a much bigger selling point than the corporation tax"; "the introduction of the tax cap, you know, brought a lot of people here"</p> <p>Interviewee 9: "Like, who doesn't want to pay less taxes? Why wouldn't you?"</p> <p>Interviewee 10: "So I guess there's big companies, they are here for just It's just tax stuff, isn't it? They just, they pay less money"</p> <p>Interviewee 11: "I realized Isle of Man has a huge tax benefits you know that for entrepreneurs it's great with the no capital gains inheritance tax that is important"</p> <p>Interviewee 14: "main attraction was the tax benefits rather than the place and everything like this"</p>	<p>https://www.iomdfenterprise.im/</p> <p>"The Isle of Man has generous financial support for businesses and a clear and simple taxation regime giving a broad range of practical advantages to those who operate internationally."</p> <p>https://www.digitalisleofman.com/</p> <p>"The Isle of Man operates a simple income tax regime with two tax rates (or bands). The standard rate is 10% and the upper rate is only 20%, with a generous personal allowance of £14,000. Residents also pay NO Capital Gains Tax, NO Inheritance Tax, and NO Stamp Duty."</p> <p>"The Isle of Man has NO corporate or capital gains tax and personal tax rates are among the lowest in Europe."</p> <p>www.Locate.im</p> <p>"With the standard rate of corporate income tax at 0%, the rate of tax on income from land and property at 20% and with the benefits of the Key Employee Concession, the Isle of Man could be an ideal place for you and your business to call home."</p>

Table 13 Alignment example

Appendix 8. Example of Misalignment

Example of Misalignment between respondents' perceptions and messages in the website

Interviews	Website
<p>Interviewee 1 : "it is just depressing thinking about getting to Heisham"</p> <p>Interviewee 2: "yes, it's trips, that's it, to getting off and on the island, I mean to go and spend a weekend in London or another place will cost a couple hundred pounds and that's too expensive to do on a frequent basis, so I'd say Yes absolutely"</p> <p>Interviewee 3: "it can be a bit frustrating, but coming from XXX-place it doesn't feel that bad"</p> <p>Interviewee 5: "It's not very comforting to look at the Steam Packet (<i>ferry service</i>), you know, like I did a few days ago and found out that a single is 240 quid with the car"</p> <p>Interviewee 6: "Yes it's a little rock stuck in the middle of the Irish sea and that stretch of water is very very expensive so that's the first thing, cause it's very expensive to get to and from here....That's why I said from the start getting to and from the Island is ridiculously expensive...You know what it's like to take the average a family of four to get to and from the Island is ridiculously expensive. And as usual it always goes up. "</p> <p>Interviewee 7: "is very bad, is very, very expensive...In the sense of, it's not enough if you want to do something, if you want to do something on impulse, yeah, you can't, if you find out about an exhibition is going on in a week you do not have a way to go. If it's winter there are no boats, if you're trying to fly going to pay 200 pounds to leave the island"</p> <p>Interviewee 8: "It's obviously a challenge. I was like, I mean, within the first week, when we started, when we moved here in 2002, we still had an airline which actually had slots at Heathrow."</p> <p>Interviewee 10: "Now you know, the general cost of living for stuff is higher and the travel costs if you go on and off the island."</p>	<p>https://www.digitalisleofman.com/</p> <p>"The Isle of Man has air links with many major airports situated in the UK, Channel Islands, Ireland and further afield along with sea links to the UK and Ireland. Most airlines operate daily flights to the Island, some taking as little as 40 minutes. Whilst via sea, both fast craft and conventional ferry services are offered."</p> <p>"Whether you choose to fly or sail to the Isle of Man you'll be impressed with how easy it is to reach Manx shores. With great air links at many major airports situated in the UK, Channel Islands, Ireland and further afield, flying to the Isle of Man couldn't be easier. Most airlines operate daily flights to the Island with those from the UK taking just 40 minutes in some cases."</p> <p>"With the 200 flights per week to 10 UK destinations, the Isle of Man is well connected to most major European cities. A flight to London Gatwick and City airports takes only 50 minutes on average."</p> <p>https://www.locate.im/</p> <p>"How to Get Here</p> <p>By Air:</p> <p>Flying is the quickest and, for many, the most convenient way to get here. In recent years, the Island's air connections have expanded, leading to greater choice for travellers. The Isle of Man Airport, Ronaldsway, has daily flights to and from England, Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland making it ideal for international connections. Ronaldsway Airport is only a 15 minute drive from the capital city of Douglas and with car hire, taxi and public transport services all at your immediate disposal, getting to and from the airport is easier than ever.</p> <p>By Sea:</p>

<p>If you weighed up for most people, it eliminates any tax saving, though, for your normal people.”</p> <p>Interviewee 14: “basically, the access to and from the Isle of Man is expensive and not really helpful to us. ...it's difficult to keep up with stuff, can't always travel as freely as you hope you could can always book two weeks in advance for the actual tickets aren't available, or they've hidden them, more to double the prices “</p> <p>Interviewee 15: “Yeah. Because the ferry is full, so expensive. The last time I brought my motorbike over here, it cost me just over 400 pounds for the week, for me to bring the car the same ferry at the same time, it was 65 pounds cheaper. But I flew because it was less than a quarter of the price including parking Liverpool airport.”</p>	<p>Sailing into the Island is a great option for those coming with extra luggage, vehicles or those wanting a more leisurely, scenic trip. The Isle of Man Steam Packet offers daily ferry and fast craft trips to the Island. You can board a ferry to Douglas from Heysham, Liverpool (Birkenhead during the winter season), Belfast and Dublin (during the spring-summer season). Click here for timetables, fares and bookings.”</p>
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Table 14 Misalignment example